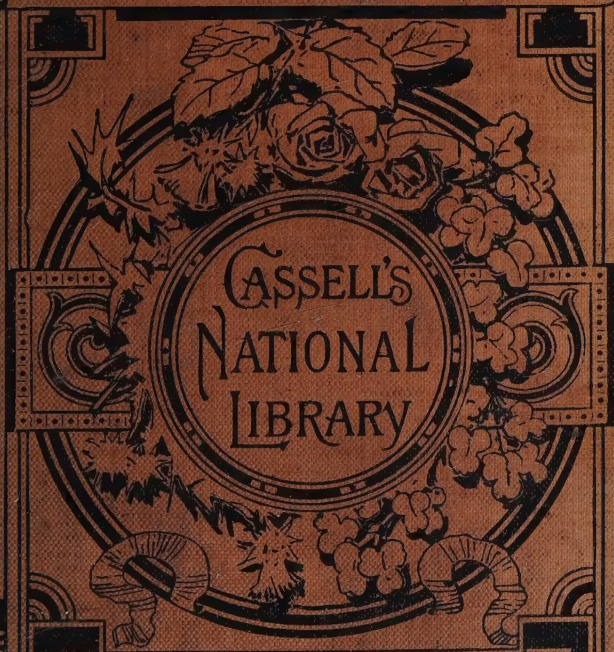
ESSAYS

COWLEY



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INTRODUCTION.

ABRAHAM COWLEY was the son of Thomas Cowley, stationer, and citizen of London in the parish of St. Michael le Querne, Cheapside. Thomas Cowley signed his will on the 24th of July, 1618, and it was proved on the 11th of the next month by his widow, Thomasine. He left six children, Peter, Audrey, John, William, Katherine, and Thomas, with a child unborn for whom the will made equal provision with the rest. The seventh child, born before the end of the same year, was named Abraham, and lived to take high place among the English Poets.

The calm spirit of Cowley's "Essays" was in all his life. As he tells us in his Essay "On Myself," even when he was a very young boy at school, instead of running about on holidays and playing with his fellows, he was wont to steal from them and walk into the fields, either alone with a book or with some one companion, if he could find any of the same temper. He wrote verse when very young, and says, "I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse as have never since left ringing there; for I remember when I began to read and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion), but there was wont to lie Spenser's works." The delight in Spenser wakened

all the music in him, and in 1628, in his tenth year, he wrote a "Tragical Historie of Pyramus and Thisbe."

In his twelfth year Cowley wrote another piece, also in sixteen stanzas, with songs interspersed, which was placed first in the little volume of *Poetical Blossoms, by A. C.*, published in 1633. It was a little quarto of thirty-two leaves, with a portrait of the author, taken at the age of thirteen. This pamphlet, dedicated to the Dean of Westminster, and with introductory verses by Cowley and two of his schoolfellows, contained "Constantia and Philetus," with the "Pyramus and Thisbe," written earlier, and three pieces written later, namely, two Elegies and "A Dream of Elysium." The inscription round the portrait describes Cowley as a King's Scholar of Westminster School; and "Pyramus and Thisbe" has a special dedication to the Head Master, Lambert Osbalston. As schoolboy, Cowley tells us that he read the Latin authors, but could not be made to learn grammar rules by rote. He was a candidate at his school in 1636 for a scholarship at Cambridge, but was not elected. In that year, however, he went to Cambridge and obtained a scholarship at Trinity.

Cowley carried to Cambridge and extended there his reputation as boy poet. In 1636 the "Poetical Blossoms" were re-issued with an appendix of sixteen more pieces under the head of "Sylva." A third edition of the "Poetical Blossoms" was printed in 1637—the year of Milton's "Lycidas" and of Ben Johnson's death. Cowley had written a five-act pastoral comedy, "Love's Riddle," while yet at school, and this was published in 1638. In the same year, 1638, when Cowley's age was twenty, a Latin comedy of his, "Naufragium Joculare," was acted by men of his College, and in the same year printed, with a dedication to Dr. Comber, Dean of Carlisle, who was

Master of Trinity. The poet Richard Crashaw, who was about two years older than Cowley, and, having entered Pembroke Hall in 1632, became a Fellow of Peterhouse in 1637, sent Cowley a June present of two unripe apricots with pleasant verses of compliment on his own early ripeness, on his April-Autumn :—

> "Take them, and me, in them acknowledging
> How much my Summer waits upon thy Spring."

Cowley was able afterwards to help Crashaw materially, and wrote some lines upon his early death.

In 1639 Cowley took the degree of B.A. In 1640 he was chosen a Minor Fellow, and in 1642 a Major Fellow, of Trinity, and he proceeded to his M.A. in due course. In March, 1641, when Prince Charles visited Cambridge, a comedy called "The Guardian," hastily written by Cowley, was acted at Trinity College for the Prince's entertainment. Cowley is said also to have written during three years at Cambridge the greater part of his heroic poem on the history of David, the "Davideis." One of the occasional poems written at this time by Cowley was on the early and sudden death of his most intimate friend at the University, William Hervey, to whom he was dearer than all but his brothers and sisters, and, says Cowley :

> "Even in that we did agree,
> For much above myself I loved them too."

Hervey and Cowley had walked daily together, and had spent nights in joint study of philosophy and poetry. Hervey "had all the light of youth, of the fire none."

> "With as much zeal, devotion, piety,
> He always lived as other saints do die.

Still with his soul severe account he kept,
Weeping all debts out ere he slept;
Then down in peace and innocence he lay,
Like the sun's laborious light,
Which still in water sets at night,
Unsullied with the journey of the day."

Cowley's friendship with this family affected the course of his life. He received many kindnesses from his friend's brother John Hervey, including introduction to Henry Jermyn, one of the most trusted friends of Queen Henrietta Maria, the friend who was created by her wish Baron Jermyn of St. Edmondsbury, who was addressed by Charles I. as "Harry," and was created by Charles II., in April, 1660, Earl of St. Albans. He was described in Queen Henrietta's time by a political scandal-monger, as "something too ugly for a lady's favourite, yet that is nothing to some." In 1643 Cowley was driven from Cambridge, and went to St. John's College, Oxford. To Oxford at the end of that year the king summoned a Parliament, which met on the 22nd of January, 1644. This brought to Oxford many peers and Royalists, who deserted the Parliament at Westminster for the king's Parliament at Oxford. It continued to sit until the 16th of April, by which time the king had found even his own Parliament to be in many respects too independent. In 1644 the queen, about to become a mother, withdrew to Exeter from Oxford, against which an army was advancing; and the parting at Oxford proved to be the last between her and her husband. A daughter was born at Exeter on the 16th of June. Within two weeks afterwards the advance of an army towards Exeter caused the queen to rise from her bed in a dangerous state of health, and, leaving her child in good keeping, escape to Plymouth, where she reached Pendennis Castle on the 29th of June. On the 2nd of July the

king's forces were defeated at Marston Moor. On the 14th of July the queen escaped from Falmouth to Brest. After some rest at the baths of Bourbon, she went on to Paris, where she was lodged in the Louvre, and well cared for. Jermyn was still her treasurer, her minister, and the friend for whose counsel she cared most.

It was into the service of this Lord Jermyn that Cowley had been introduced through his friendship with the Herveys. He went to Paris as Lord Jermyn's secretary, had charge of the queen's political correspondence, ciphered and deciphered letters between Queen Henrietta and King Charles, and was thus employed so actively under Lord Jermyn that his work filled all his days, and many of his nights. He was sent also on journeys to Jersey, Scotland, Flanders, Holland, or wherever else the king's troubles required his attendance. In 1647 Cowley published his volume of forty-four love poems, called "The Mistress." He was himself no gallant, neither paid court to ladies, nor married. His love poetry was hypothetical; and of his life at this time he says: "Though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere; though I was in business of great and honourable trust; though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best convenience for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition in banishment and public distresses, yet I could not abstain from renewing my old schoolboy's wish in a copy of verses to the same effect:—

> "'Well, then, I now do plainly see
> This busy world and I shall ne'er agree,' &c.,

and I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his Majesty's happy restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought, in that case, I might easily have compassed, as well as some others who, with no

greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortunes."

In 1654 Queen Henrietta, under influence of a new confessor, had left the Louvre, and, with the little daughter born at Exeter, taken up her quarters in a foundation of her own, at Chaillot, for nuns of the visitation of St. Mary. Lord Jermyn having little use left for a secretary in Paris, Cowley in 1656, after twelve years' service in France, was sent to England that he might there live in the retirement he preferred, and with the understanding that he would be able to send information upon the course of home affairs. In England he was presently seized by mistake for another man, and, when his name and position were known, he was imprisoned, until a friendly physician, Sir Charles Scarborough, undertook to be security in a thousand pounds for his good conduct. In this year, 1656, Cowley published the first folio volume of his Poems, prepared in prison, and suggested, he said, by his finding, when he returned to England, a book called "The Iron Age," which had been published as his, and caused him to wonder that any one foolish enough to write such bad verses should yet be so wise as to publish them under another man's name. Cowley thought then that he had taken leave of verse, which needed less troubled times for its reading, and a mind less troubled in the writer. He left out of his book, he said, the pieces written during the Civil War, including three books of the Civil War itself, reaching as far as the first battle of Newbury. These he had burnt, for, he said, "I would have it accounted no less unlawful to rip up old wounds than to give new ones." "When the event of battle and the unaccountable Will of God has determined the controversy, and that we have submitted to the will of the conqueror, we must lay down our pens as well as arms." The first

part of this folio contained early poems; the second part "The Mistress;" the third part "Pindaric Odes;" and the fourth and last his "Davideis."

In September of the following year, 1657, Cowley acted as best man to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, on his marriage at Bolton Percy, to Fairfax's daughter; Cowley wrote also a sonnet for the bride. In December he obtained, by influence of friends, the degree of M.D. from the University of Oxford, and retired into Kent to study botany. Such study caused him then to write a Latin poem upon Plants, in six books: the first two on Herbs, in elegiac verse; the next two on Flowers, in various measures; and the last two on Trees, in heroic numbers:—"*Plantarum, Libri VI.*"

After the death of Cromwell, Cowley returned to France, but he came back to England in 1660, when he published an "Ode on His Majesty's Restoration and Return," and "A Discourse by way of Vision concerning the Government of Oliver Cromwell." He was admitted, as Dr. Cowley, among the first members of the Royal Society then founded; but he was excluded from the favour of the king. He had written an "Ode to Brutus," for which, said his Majesty, it was enough for Mr. Cowley to be forgiven. A noble lord replied to Cowley's Ode, in praise of Brutus, with an Ode against that Rebel. Cowley's old friend, Lord Jermyn, now made Earl of St. Alban's, joined, however, with George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, in providing for the poet all that was required to secure to him the quiet life that he desired. Provision to such end had been promised him both by Charles I. and Charles II., in the definite form of the office of Master of the Savoy, but the post was given by Charles II. to a brother of one of his mistresses.

Cowley recast his old comedy of "The Guardian," and produced it in December, 1661, as "Cutter of

Coleman Street." It was played for a week to a full audience, though some condemned it on the supposition it was a satire upon the king's party. Cowley certainly was too pure and thoughtful to be a fit associate for Charles II. and many of his friends. The help that came from the Earl of St. Albans and the Duke of Buckingham, was in the form of such a lease of the Queen's lands as gave the poet a sufficient income. Others who had served little were enriched; but he was set at ease, and sought no more. He then made his home by the Thames, first at Barn Elms, and afterwards at Chertsey, at which latter place he lived for about a year in the Porch House, that yet stands. Cowley was living at Chertsey when a July evening in damp meadows gave him a cold, of which he died within a fortnight. That was in the year 1667, year also of the death of Jeremy Taylor, and of the birth of Jonathan Swift.

Abraham Cowley is at his truest in these ESSAYS, written during the last seven years of his life. Their style is simple, and their thoughts are pure. They have, for their keynote, the happiness of one who loves true liberty in quiet possession of himself. When he turns to the Latins, his translations are all from those lines which would have dwelt most pleasantly upon a mind that to the last held by the devout wish expressed by himself in a poem of his early youth—(*A Vote*, in "Sylva"):

"Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.
My house a cottage more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden, painted o'er
With Nature's hand, not Art's, should pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field."

H. M.

Cowley's Essays.

OF LIBERTY.

The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made themselves, under whatsoever form it be of government; the liberty of a private man in being master of his own time and actions, as far as may consist with the laws of God and of his country. Of this latter only we are here to discourse, and to inquire what estate of life does best suit us in the possession of it. This liberty of our own actions is such a fundamental privilege of human nature, that God Himself, notwithstanding all His infinite power and right over us, permits us to enjoy it, and that, too, after a forfeiture made by the rebellion of Adam. He takes so much care for the entire preservation of it

to us, that He suffers neither His providence nor eternal decree to break or infringe it. Now for our time, the same God, to whom we are but tenants-at-will for the whole, requires but the seventh part to be paid to Him at as a small quit-rent, in acknowledgment of His title. It is man only that has the impudence to demand our whole time, though he neither gave it, nor can restore it, nor is able to pay any considerable value for the least part of it. This birthright of mankind above all other creatures some are forced by hunger to sell, like Esau, for bread and broth; but the greatest part of men make such a bargain for the delivery up of themselves, as Thamar did with Judah; instead of a kid, the necessary provisions for human life, they are contented to do it for rings and bracelets. The great dealers in this world may be divided into the ambitious, the covetous, and the voluptuous; and that all these men sell themselves to be slaves—though to the vulgar it may seem a Stoical paradox—will appear to the wise so plain and obvious that they will

scarce think it deserves the labour of argumentation. Let us first consider the ambitious; and those, both in their progress to greatness, and after the attaining of it. There is nothing truer than what Sallust says: "*Dominationis in alios servitium suum mercedem dant*": They are content to pay so great a price as their own servitude to purchase the domination over others. The first thing they must resolve to sacrifice is their whole time; they must never stop, nor ever turn aside whilst they are in the race of glory; no, not like Atalanta for golden apples; "Neither indeed can a man stop himself if he would, when he is in this career. *Fertur equis auriga neque audit currus habenas.*

Pray let us but consider a little what mean, servile things men do for this imaginary food. We cannot fetch a greater example of it than from the chief men of that nation which boasted most of liberty. To what pitiful baseness did the noblest Romans submit themselves for the obtaining of a prætorship, or the consular dignity? They put on

the habit of suppliants, and ran about, on foot and in dirt, through all the tribes to beg voices; they flattered the poorest artisans, and carried a nomenclator with them, to whisper in their ear every man's name, lest they should mistake it in their salutations; they shook the hand, and kissed the cheek of every popular tradesman; they stood all day at every market in the public places, to show and ingratiate themselves to the rout; they employed all their friends to solicit for them; they kept open tables in every street; they distributed wine, and bread, and money, even to the vilest of the people. *En Romanos, rerum Dominos!* Behold the masters of the world beginning from door to door. This particular humble way to greatness is now out of fashion, but yet every ambitious person is still in some sort a Roman candidate. He must feast and bribe, and attend and flatter, and adore many beasts, though not the beast with many heads. Catiline, who was so proud that he could not content himself with a less power than Sylla's, was yet so humble for the attaining of it,

as to make himself the most contemptible of all servants, to be a public bawd for all the young gentlemen of Rome whose hot lusts, and courages, and heads, he thought he might make use of. And since I happen here to propose Catiline for my instance, though there be thousand of examples for the same thing, give me leave to transcribe the character which Cicero gives of this noble slave, because it is a general description of all ambitious men, and which Machiavel perhaps would say ought to be the rule of their life and actions. "This man," says he, as most of you may well remember, "had many artificial touches and strokes that looked like the beauty of great virtues; his intimate conversation was with the worst of men, and yet he seemed to be an admirer and lover of the best; he was furnished with all the nets of lust and luxury, and yet wanted not the arms of labour and industry: neither do I believe that there was ever any monster in nature, composed out of so many different and disagreeing parts. Who more acceptable, sometimes, to the most honourable persons?

who more a favourite to the most infamous? who, sometimes, appeared a braver champion? who, at other times, a bolder enemy to his country? who more dissolute in his pleasures? who more patient in his toils? who more rapacious in robbing? who more profuse in giving? Above all things, this was remarkable and admirable in him. The arts he had to acquire the good opinion and kindness of all sorts of men, to retain it with great complaisance, to communicate all things to them, to watch and serve all the occasions of their fortune, both with his money and his interest, and his industry, and if need were, not by sticking at any wickedness whatsoever that might be useful to them, to bend and turn about his own nature and laveer with every wind, to live severely with the melancholy, merrily with the pleasant, gravely with the aged, wantonly with the young, desperately with the bold, and debauchedly with the luxurious. With this variety and multiplicity of his nature, as he had made a collection of friendships with all the most wicked and reckless of all

nations, so, by the artificial simulation of some virtues, he made a shift to ensnare some honest and eminent persons into his familiarity; neither could so vast a design as the destruction of this empire have been undertaken by him, if the immanity of so many vices had not been covered and disguised by the appearances of some excellent qualities."

I see, methinks, the character of an Anti-Paul, who became all things to all men, that he might destroy all; who only wanted the assistance of fortune to have been as great as his friend Cæsar was, a little after him. And the ways of Cæsar to compass the same ends—I mean till the civil war, which was but another manner of setting his country on fire—were not unlike these, though he used afterward his unjust dominion with more moderation than I think the other would have done. Sallust, therefore, who was well acquainted with them both. and with many such-like gentlemen of his time, says, "That it is the nature of ambition" (*Ambitio multos mortales falsos fieri*

coegit, etc.) "to make men liars and cheaters; to hide the truth in their breasts, and show, like jugglers, another thing in their mouths; to cut all friendships and enmities to the measure of their own interest, and to make a good countenance without the help of good will." And can there be freedom with this perpetual constraint? What is it but a kind of rack that forces men to say what they have no mind to? I have wondered at the extravagant and barbarous stratagem of Zopirus, and more at the praises which I find of so deformed an action; who, though he was one of the seven grandees of Persia, and the son of Megabises, who had freed before his country from an ignoble servitude, slit his own nose and lips, cut off his own ears, scourged and wounded his whole body, that he might, under pretence of having been mangled so inhumanly by Darius, be received into Babylon (then besieged by the Persians) and get into the command of it by the recommendation of so cruel a sufferance, and their hopes of his endeavouring to revenge it. It is a great pity the Babylonians

suspected not his falsehood, that they might have cut off his hands too, and whipped him back again. But the design succeeded; he betrayed the city, and was made governor of it. What brutish master ever punished his offending slave with so little mercy as ambition did this Zopirus? and yet how many are there in all nations who imitate him in some degree for a less reward; who, though they endure not so much corporal pain for a small preferment, or some honour, as they call it, yet stick not to commit actions, by which they are more shamefully and more lastingly stigmatised? But you may say, "Though these be the most ordinary and open ways to greatness, yet there are narrow, thorny, and little-trodden paths, too, through which some men find a passage by virtuous industry." I grant, sometimes they may; but then that industry must be such as cannot consist with liberty, though it may with honesty.

Thou art careful, frugal, painful. We commend a servant so, but not a friend.

Well, then, we must acknowledge the toil and

drudgery which we are forced to endure in this assent, but we are epicures and lords when once we are gotten up into the high places. This is but a short apprenticeship, after which we are made free of a royal company. If we fall in love with any beauteous woman, we must be content that they should be our mistresses whilst we woo them. As soon as we are wedded and enjoy, 'tis we shall be the masters.

I am willing to stick to this similitude in the case of greatness: we enter into the bonds of it, like those of matrimony; we are bewitched with the outward and painted beauty, and take it for better or worse before we know its true nature and interior inconveniences. "A great fortune," says Seneca, "is a great servitude." But many are of that opinion which Brutus imputes (I hope untruly) even to that patron of liberty, his friend Cicero. "We fear," says he to Atticus, "death, and banishment, and poverty, a great deal too much. Cicero, I am afraid, thinks these to be the worst of evils, and if he have but some persons from whom he

can obtain what he has a mind to, and others who will flatter and worship him, seems to be well enough contented with an honourable servitude, if anything, indeed, ought to be called honourable in so base and contumelious a condition." This was spoken as became the bravest man who was ever born in the bravest commonwealth. But with us, generally, no condition passes for servitude that is accompanied with great riches, with honours, and with the service of many inferiors. This is but a deception of the sight through a false medium; for if a groom serve a gentleman in his chamber, that gentleman a lord, and that lord a prince, the groom, the gentleman, and the lord are as much servants one as the other. The circumstantial difference of the one getting only his bread and wages, the second a plentiful, and the third a superfluous estate, is no more intrinsical to this matter than the difference between a plain, a rich and gaudy livery. I do not say that he who sells his whole time and his own will for one hundred thousand is not a wiser merchant than he

who does it for one hundred pounds; but I will swear they are both merchants, and that he is happier than both who can live contentedly without selling that estate to which he was born. But this dependence upon superiors is but one chain of the lovers of power, *Amatorem trecentæ Pirithoum cohibent catenæ.* Let us begin with him by break of day, for by that time he is besieged by two or three hundred suitors, and the hall and anti-chambers (all the outworks) possessed by the enemy; as soon as his chamber opens, they are ready to break into that, or to corrupt the guards for entrance. This is so essential a part of greatness, that whosoever is without it looks like a fallen favourite, like a person disgraced, and condemned to do what he please all the morning. There are some who, rather than want this, are contented to have their rooms filled up every day with murmuring and cursing creditors, and to charge bravely through a body of them to get to their coach. Now I would fain know which is the worst duty, that of any one particular person who

waits to speak with the great man, or the great man's, who waits every day to speak with all the company. *Aliena negotia centum Per caput et circum saliunt latus:* A hundred businesses of other men (many unjust and most impertinent) fly continually about his head and ears, and strike him in the face like dors. Let us contemplate him a little at another special scene of glory, and that is his table. Here he seems to be the lord of all Nature. The earth affords him her best metals for his dishes, her best vegetables and animals for his food; the air and sea supply him with their choicest birds and fishes; and a great many men who look like masters attend upon him; and yet, when all this is done, even all this is but Table d'Hôte. It is crowded with people for whom he cares not—with many parasites, and some spies, with the most burdensome sort of guests—the endeavourers to be witty.

But everybody pays him great respect, everybody commends his meat—that is, his money; everybody admires the exquisite dressing and ordering

of it—that is, his clerk of the kitchen, or his cook; everybody loves his hospitality—that is, his vanity. But I desire to know why the honest innkeeper who provides a public table for his profits should be but of a mean profession, and he who does it for his honour a munificent prince. You'll say, because one sells and the other gives. Nay, both sell, though for different things—the one for plain money, the other for I know not what jewels, whose value is in custom and in fancy. If, then, his table be made a snare (as the Scripture speaks) to his liberty, where can he hope for freedom? there is always and everywhere some restraint upon him. He is guarded with crowds, and shackled with formalities. The half hat, the whole hat, the half smile, the whole smile, the nod, the embrace, the positive parting with a little bow, the comparative at the middle of the room, the superlative at the door; and if the person be *Pan huper sebastos*, there's a *Huper superlative* ceremony then of conducting him to the bottom of the stairs, or to the very gate: as if there were

such rules set to these Leviathans as are to the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further." *Perditur hæc inter misero Lux.* Thus wretchedly the precious day is lost.

How many impertinent letters and visits must he receive, and sometimes answer both too as impertinently? He never sets his foot beyond his threshold, unless, like a funeral, he hath a train to follow him, as if, like the dead corpse, he could not stir till the bearers were all ready. "My life," says Horace, speaking to one of these *magnificos*, "is a great deal more easy and commodious than thine, in that I can go into the market and cheapen what I please without being wondered at; and take my horse and ride as far as Tarentum without being missed." It is an unpleasant constraint to be always under the sight and observation and censure of others; as there may be vanity in it, so, methinks, there should be vexation too of spirit. And I wonder how princes can endure to have two or three hundred men stand gazing upon them whilst they are at dinner, and

taking notice of every bit they eat. Nothing seems greater and more lordly than the multitude of domestic servants, but, even this too, if weighed seriously, is a piece of servitude; unless you will be a servant to them, as many men are, the trouble and care of yours in the government of them all, is much more than that of every one of them in their observation of you. I take the profession of a schoolmaster to be one of the most useful, and which ought to be of the most honourable in a commonwealth, yet certainly all his farces and tyrannical authority over so many boys takes away his own liberty more than theirs.

I do but slightly touch upon all these particulars of the slavery of greatness; I shake but a few of their outward chains; their anger, hatred, jealousy, fear, envy, grief, and all the *et cetera* of their passions, which are the secret but constant tyrants and torturers of their life. I omit here, because though they be symptoms most frequent and violent in this disease, yet they are common too in some degree to the epidemical disease of life itself. But

the ambitious man, though he be so many ways a slave (*O toties servus!*), yet he bears it bravely and heroically; he struts and looks big upon the stage, he thinks himself a real prince in his masking habit, and deceives too all the foolish part of his spectators. He's a slave in *Saturnalibus.* The covetous man is a downright servant, a draught horse without bells or feathers; *ad metalla damnatus*, a man condemned to work in mines, which is the lowest and hardest condition of servitude; and, to increase his misery, a worker there for he knows not whom. He heapeth up riches and knows not who shall enjoy them; 'tis only that he himself neither shall nor can enjoy them. He is an indigent needy slave, he will hardly allow himself clothes and board wages; *Unciatim vix demenso de suo suum defraudans Genium comparsit miser.* He defrauds not only other men, but his own genius. He cheats himself for money. But the servile and miserable condition of this wretch is so apparent, that I leave it, as evident to every man's sight, as well as judgment. It seems a more

difficult work to prove that the voluptuous man too is but a servant. What can be more the life of a freeman, or, as we say ordinarily, of a gentleman, than to follow nothing but his own pleasures? Why, I'll tell you who is that true freeman and that true gentleman; not he who blindly follows all his pleasures (the very name of follower is servile), but he who rationally guides them, and is not hindered by outward impediments in the conduct and enjoyment of them. If I want skill or force to restrain the beast that I ride upon, though I bought it, and call it my own, yet in the truth of the matter I am at that time rather his man than he my horse. The voluptuous men (whom we are fallen upon) may be divided, I think, into the lustful and luxurious, who are both servants of the belly; the other whom we spoke of before, the ambitious and the covetous, were κακὰ θηρία, evil wild beasts; these are γαστέρες ἀργαί, slow bellies, as our translation renders it; but the word Ἀργαί (which is a fantastical word with two directly opposite significations) will bear as well the trans-

lation of quick or diligent bellies, and both interpretations may be applied to these men. Metrodorus said, "That he had learnt Ἀληθως γαστρὶ χαρίζεσθαι, to give his belly just thanks for all his pleasures." This by the calumniators of Epicurus his philosophy was objected as one of the most scandalous of all their sayings, which, according to my charitable understanding, may admit a very virtuous sense, which is, that he thanked his own belly for that moderation in the customary appetites of it, which can only give a man liberty and happiness in this world. Let this suffice at present to be spoken of those great triumviri of the world; the covetous man, who is a mean villain, like Lepidus; the ambitious, who is a brave one, like Octavius; and the voluptuous, who is a loose and debauched one, like Mark Antony. *Quisnam igitur Liber? Sapiens, sibi qui Imperiosus.* Not Oenomaus, who commits himself wholly to a charioteer that may break his neck, but the man

> Who governs his own course with steady hand,
> Who does himself with sovereign power command;

> Whom neither death nor poverty does fright,
> Who stands not awkwardly in his own light
> Against the truth : who can, when pleasures knock
> Loud at his door, keep firm the bolt and lock.
> Who can, though honour at his gate should stay
> In all her masking clothes, send her away,
> And cry, Begone, I have no mind to play.

This I confess is a freeman ; but it may be said that many persons are so shackled by their fortune that they are hindered from enjoyment of that manumission which they have obtained from virtue. I do both understand, and in part feel the weight of this objection. All I can answer to it is, "That we must get as much liberty as we can ; we must use our utmost endeavours, and when all that is done, be contented with the length of that line which is allowed us." If you ask me in what condition of life I think the most allowed, I should pitch upon that sort of people whom King James was wont to call the happiest of our nation, the men placed in the country by their fortune above an high constable, and yet beneath the trouble of a justice of the peace, in a moderate plenty, without

any just argument for the desire of increasing it by the care of many relations, and with so much knowledge and love of piety and philosophy (that is, of the study of God's laws and of his creatures) as may afford him matter enough never to be idle though without business, and never to be melancholy though without sin or vanity.

I shall conclude this tedious discourse with a prayer of mine in a copy of Latin verses, of which I remember no other part, and (*pour faire bonne bouche*) with some other verses upon the same subject.

Magne Deus, quod ad has vitæ brevis attinet horas,
Da mihi, da Panem Libertatemque, nec ultrà
Sollicitas effundo preces, si quid datur ultrà
Accipiam gratus ; si non, contentus abibo.

For the few hours of life allotted me,
Give me, great God, but Bread and Liberty,
I'll beg no more ; if more thou'rt pleased to give,
I'll thankfully that overplus receive.
If beyond this no more be freely sent,
I'll thank for this, and go away content.

MARTIAL. LIB. 2.

Vota tui breviter, etc.

WELL then, sir, you shall know how far extend,
The prayers and hopes of your poetic friend.
He does not palaces nor manors crave,
Would be no lord, but less a lord would have.
The ground he holds, if he his own can call,
He quarrels not with Heaven because 'tis small:
Let gay and toilsome greatness others please,
He loves of homely littleness the ease.
Can any man in gilded rooms attend,
And his dear hours in humble visits spend,
When in the fresh and beauteous fields he may
With various healthful pleasures fill the day?
If there be man, ye gods, I ought to hate,
Dependence and attendance be his fate.
Still let him busy be, and in a crowd,
And very much a slave, and very proud:
Thus he, perhaps, powerful and rich may grow;
No matter, O ye gods! that I'll allow.

But let him peace and freedom never see;
Let him not love this life, who loves not me.

Martial. Lib. 2.

Vis fieri Liber, etc.

Would you be free? 'Tis your chief wish, you say,
Come on; I'll show thee, friend, the certain way.
If to no feasts abroad thou lov'st to go,
Whilst bounteous God does bread at home bestow;
If thou the goodness of thy clothes dost prize
By thine own use, and not by others' eyes;
If, only safe from weathers, thou canst dwell
In a small house, but a convenient shell;
If thou without a sigh, or golden wish,
Canst look upon thy beechen bowl and dish;
If in thy mind such power and greatness be—
The Persian King's a slave compared with thee.

Martial. L. 2.

Quod te nomine? etc.

That I do you with humble bows no more,
And danger of my naked head, adore;
That I, who lord and master cried erewhile,
Salute you in a new and different style,
By your own name, a scandal to you now;
Think not that I forget myself or you:
By loss of all things by all others sought
This freedom, and the freeman's hat, is bought.
A lord and master no man wants but he
Who o'er himself has no authority,
Who does for honours and for riches strive,
And follies without which lords cannot live.
If thou from fortune dost no servant crave,
Believe it, thou no master need'st to have.

Ode
UPON LIBERTY.

I.

Freedom with virtue takes her seat;
Her proper place, her only scene,
Is in the golden mean,
She lives not with the poor, nor with the great:
The wings of those, Necessity has clipped,
And they're in Fortune's Bridewell whipped,
To the laborious task of bread;
These are by various tyrants captive led.
Now wild Ambition with imperious force
Rides, reins, and spurs them like th' unruly horse;
And servile Avarice yokes them now
Like toilsome oxen to the plough;
And sometimes Lust, like the misguiding light,
Draws them through all the labyrinths of night.
If any few among the great there be
From the insulting passions free,

Yet we even those too fettered see
By custom, business, crowds, and formal decency;
And wheresoe'er they stay, and wheresoe'er they go,
Impertinences round them flow.
These are the small uneasy things
Which about greatness still are found,
And rather it molest than wound
Like gnats which too much heat of summer brings;
But cares do swarm there too, and those have stings:
As when the honey does too open lie,
A thousand wasps about it fly
Nor will the master even to share admit;
The master stands aloof, and dares not taste of it.

II.

'Tis morning, well, I fain would yet sleep on;
You cannot now; you must be gone
To Court, or to the noisy hall:
Besides, the rooms without are crowded all;
The steam of business does begin,
And a springtide of clients is come in.

Ah, cruel guards, which this poor prisoner keep,
Will they not suffer him to sleep!
Make an escape; out at the postern flee,
And get some blessed hours of liberty.
With a few friends, and a few dishes dine,
And much of mirth and moderate wine;
To thy bent mind some relaxation give,
And steal one day out of thy life to live.
Oh happy man, he cries, to whom kind Heaven
Has such a freedom always given!
Why, mighty madman, what should hinder thee
From being every day as free?

III.

In all the freeborn nations of the air,
Never did bird a spirit so mean and sordid bear
As to exchange his native liberty
Of soaring boldly up into the sky,
His liberty to sing, to perch, or fly
When, and wherever he thought good,
And all his innocent pleasures of the wood,
For a more plentiful or constant food.

Nor ever did ambitious rage
Make him into a painted cage
Or the false forest of a well-hung room
For honour and preferment come.
Now, blessings on ye all, ye heroic race,
Who keep their primitive powers and rights so well
Though men and angels fell.
Of all material lives the highest place
To you is justly given,
And ways and walks the nearest Heaven;
Whilst wretched we, yet vain and proud, think fit
To boast that we look up to it.
Even to the universal tyrant Love
You homage pay but once a year;
None so degenerous and unbirdly prove,
As his perpetual yoke to bear.
None but a few unhappy household fowl,
Whom human lordship does control;
Who from their birth corrupted were
By bondage, and by man's example here.

IV.

He's no small prince who every day
Thus to himself can say,
Now will I sleep, now eat, now sit, now walk,
Now meditate alone, now with acquaintance talk;
This I will do, here I will stay,
Or, if my fancy call me away,
My man and I will presently go ride
(For we before have nothing to provide,
Nor after are to render an account)
To Dover, Berwick, or the Cornish Mount.
If thou but a short journey take,
As if thy last thou wert to make,
Business must be despatched ere thou canst part.
Nor canst thou stir unless there be
A hundred horse and men to wait on thee,
And many a mule, and many a cart:
What an unwieldy man thou art!
The Rhodian Colossus so
A journey too might go.

V.

Where honour or where conscience does not bind,
No other law shall shackle me?
Slave to myself I will not be,
Nor shall my future actions be confined
By my own present mind.
Who by resolves and vows engaged does stand
For days that yet belong to fate,
Does like an unthrift mortgage his estate
Before it falls into his hand;
The bondman of the cloister so
All that he does receive does always owe.
And still as time come in it goes away,
Not to enjoy, but debts to pay.
Unhappy slave, and pupil to a bell
Which his hour's work, as well as hour's does tell!
Unhappy till the last, the kind releasing knell.

VI.

If Life should a well-ordered poem be
(In which he only hits the white

Who joins true profit with the best delight),
The more heroic strain let others take,
Mine the Pindaric way I'll make,
The matter shall be grave, the numbers loose and free.
It shall not keep one settled pace of time,
In the same tune it shall not always chime,
Nor shall each day just to his neighbour rhyme.
A thousand liberties it shall dispense,
And yet shall manage all without offence
Or to the sweetness of the sound, or greatness of the sense;
Nor shall it never from one subject start,
Nor seek transitions to depart,
Nor its set way o'er stiles and bridges make,
Nor thorough lanes a compass take
As if it feared some trespass to commit,
When the wide air 's a road for it.
So the imperial eagle does not stay
Till the whole carcase he devour
That's fallen into its power;
As if his generous hunger understood

That he can never want plenty of food,
He only sucks the tasteful blood,
And to fresh game flies cheerfully away ;
To kites and meaner birds he leaves the mangled prey.

OF SOLITUDE.

"*Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus,*" is now become a very vulgar saying. Every man and almost every boy for these seventeen hundred years has had it in his mouth. But it was at first spoken by the excellent Scipio, who was without question a most worthy, most happy, and the greatest of all mankind. His meaning no doubt was this: that he found more satisfaction to his mind, and more improvement of it by solitude than by company; and to show that he spoke not this loosely or out of vanity, after he had made Rome mistress of almost the whole world, he retired himself from it by a voluntary exile, and at a private house in the middle of a wood near Linternum passed the remainder of his glorious life no less gloriously. This house Seneca went to see so long after with great veneration. and, among other things, describes

his bath to have been of so mean a structure, that now, says he, the basest of the people would despise them, and cry out, "Poor Scipio understood not how to live." What an authority is here for the credit of retreat! and happy had it been for Hannibal if adversity could have taught him as much wisdom as was learnt by Scipio from the highest prosperities. This would be no wonder if it were as truly as it is colourably and wittily said by Monsieur de Montaigne, that ambition itself might teach us to love solitude: there is nothing does so much hate to have companions. It is true, it loves to have its elbows free, it detests to have company on either side, but it delights above all things in a train' behind, aye, and ushers, too, before it. But the greater part of men are so far from the opinion of that noble Roman, that if they chance at any time to be without company they are like a becalmed ship; they never move but by the wind of other men's breath, and have no oars of their own to steer withal. It is very fantastical and contradictory in human nature,

that men should love themselves above all the rest of the world, and yet never endure to be with themselves. When they are in love with a mistress, all other persons are importunate and burdensome to them. "*Tecum vivere amem, tecum obeam lubens,*" They would live and die with her alone.

Sic ego secretis possum benè vivere silvis
Quà nulla humano sit via trita pede,
Tu mihi curarum requies, tu nocte vel atrâ
Lumen, et in solis tu mihi turba locis.

With thee for ever I in woods could rest,
Where never human foot the ground has pressed;
Thou from all shades the darkness canst exclude,
And from a desert banish solitude.

And yet our dear self is so wearisome to us that we can scarcely support its conversation for an hour together. This is such an odd temper of mind as Catullus expresses towards one of his mistresses, whom we may suppose to have been of a very unsociable humour.

Odi et Amo, qua nam id faciam ratione requiris?
Nescio, sed fieri sentio, et excrucior.

I hate, and yet I love thee too;
How can that be? I know not how;
Only that so it is I know,
And feel with torment that 'tis so.

It is a deplorable condition this, and drives a man sometimes to pitiful shifts in seeking how to avoid himself.

The truth of the matter is, that neither he who is a fop in the world is a fit man to be alone, nor he who has set his heart much upon the world, though he has ever so much understanding; so that solitude can be well fitted and set right but upon a very few persons. They must have enough knowledge of the world to see the vanity of it, and enough virtue to despise all vanity; if the mind be possessed with any lust or passions, a man had better be in a fair than in a wood alone. They may, like petty thieves, cheat us perhaps, and pick our pockets in the midst of company, but like

robbers, they use to strip and bind, or murder us when they catch us alone. This is but to retreat from men, and fall into the hands of devils. It is like the punishment of parricides among the Romans, to be sewed into a bag with an ape, a dog, and a serpent. The first work, therefore, that a man must do to make himself capable of the good of solitude is the very eradication of all lusts, for how is it possible for a man to enjoy himself while his affections are tied to things without himself? In the second place, he must learn the art and get the habit of thinking; for this too, no less than well speaking, depends upon much practice; and cogitation is the thing which distinguishes the solitude of a god from a wild beast. Now because the soul of man is not by its own nature or observation furnished with sufficient materials to work upon; it is necessary for it to have continual resource to learning and books for fresh supplies, so that the solitary life will grow indigent, and be ready to starve without them; but if once we be thoroughly engaged in the love of

letters, instead of being wearied with the length of any day, we shall only complain of the shortness of our whole life.

O vita, stulto longa, sapienti brevis!

O life, long to the fool, short to the wise!

The First Minister of State has not so much business in public as a wise man has in private; if the one have little leisure to be alone, the other has less leisure to be in company; the one has but part of the affairs of one nation, the other all the works of God and nature under his consideration. There is no saying shocks me so much as that which I hear very often, "That a man does not know how to pass his time." It would have been but ill spoken by Methusalem in the nine hundred and sixty-ninth year of his life, so far it is from us, who have not time enough to attain to the utmost perfection of any part of any science, to have cause to complain that we are forced to be idle for want of work. But this you will say is work only for the learned, others are not capable either of the

employments or the divertisements that arise from letters. I know they are not, and therefore cannot much recommend solitude to a man totally illiterate. But if any man be so unlearned as to want entertainment of the little intervals of accidental solitude, which frequently occur in almost all conditions (except the very meanest of the people, who have business enough in the necessary provisions for life), it is truly a great shame both to his parents and himself; for a very small portion of any ingenious art will stop up all those gaps of our time, either music, or painting, or designing, or chemistry, or history, or gardening, or twenty other things, will do it usefully and pleasantly; and if he happen to set his affections upon poetry (which I do not advise him too immoderately) that will overdo it; no wood will be thick enough to hide him from the importunities of company or business, which would abstract him from his beloved.

——— *O quis me gelidis sub montibus Hæmi*
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbrâ?

I.

Hail, old patrician trees, so great and good!
Hail, ye plebeian underwood!
Where the poetic birds rejoice,
And for their quiet nests and plenteous food
Pay with their grateful voice.

II.

Hail, the poor Muses' richest manor seat!
Ye country houses and retreat
Which all the happy gods so love,
That for you oft they quit their bright and great
Metropolis above.

III.

Here Nature does a house for me erect,
Nature the wisest architect,
Who those fond artists does despise
That can the fair and living trees neglect,
Yet the dead timber prize.

IV.

Here let me, careless and unthoughtful lying,
Hear the soft winds, above me flying,

With all their wanton boughs dispute,
And the more tuneful birds to both replying,
Nor be myself too mute.

V.

A silver stream shall roll his waters near,
Gilt with the sunbeams here and there,
On whose enamelled bank I'll walk,
And see how prettily they smile, and hear
How prettily they talk.

VI.

Ah wretched, and too solitary he
Who loves not his own company!
He'll feel the weight of't many a day,
Unless he call in sin or vanity
To help to bear't away.

VII.

Oh solitude, first state of human-kind!
Which blest remained till man did find
Even his own helper's company.
As soon as two, alas, together joined,
The serpent made up three.

VIII.

Though God himself, through countless ages, thee
His sole companion chose to be,
Thee, sacred Solitude alone;
Before the branchy head of numbers Three
Sprang from the trunk of One.

IX.

Thou (though men think thine an unactive part)
Dost break and tame th' unruly heart,
Which else would know no settled pace,
Making it move, well managed by thy art
With swiftness and with grace.

X.

Thou the faint beams of Reason's scattered light
Dost like a burning glass unite;
Dost multiply the feeble heat,
And fortify the strength, till thou dost bright
And noble fires beget.

XI.

Whilst this hard truth I teach, methinks, I see
The monster London laugh at me;

I should at thee too, foolish city,
If it were fit to laugh at misery.
But thy estate, I pity.

XII.

Let but thy wicked men from out thee go,
And the fools that crowd thee so,—
Even thou, who dost thy millions boast,
A village less than Islington wilt grow,
A solitude almost.

OF OBSCURITY.

Nam neque divitibus contingunt gaudia solis,
Nec vixit male, qui natus moriensque fefellit.

God made not pleasures only for the rich,
Nor have those men without their share too lived,
Who both in life and death the world deceived.

This seems a strange sentence thus literally translated, and looks as if it were in vindication of the men of business (for who else can deceive the world?) whereas it is in commendation of those who live and die so obscurely, that the world takes no notice of them. This Horace calls deceiving the world, and in another place uses the same phrase.

Secretum iter et fallentis semita vitæ.
The secret tracks of the deceiving life.

It is very elegant in Latin, but our English

word will hardly bear up to that sense, and therefore Mr. Broome translates it very well :

> Or from a life, led as it were by stealth.

Yet we say in our language, a thing deceives our sight, when it passes before us unperceived, and we may say well enough out of the same author :

> Sometimes with sleep, sometimes with wine we strive
> The cares of life and troubles to deceive.

But that is not to deceive the world, but to deceive ourselves, as Quintilian says, *Vitam fallere*, To draw on still, and amuse, and deceive our life, till it be advanced insensibly to the fatal period, and fall into that pit which Nature hath prepared for it. The meaning of all this is no more than that most vulgar saying, *Bene qui latuit, bene vixit*, He has lived well, who has lain well hidden. Which, if it be a truth, the world, I'll swear, is sufficiently deceived. For my part, I think it is, and that the pleasantest condition of life, is in *incognito*. What a brave privilege is it to be free

from all contentions, from all envying or being envied, from receiving and from paying all kind of ceremonies? It is in my mind a very delightful pastime, for two good and agreeable friends to travel up and down together in places where they are by nobody known, nor know anybody. It was the case of Æneas and his Achates, when they walked invisibly about the fields and streets of Carthage, Venus herself

> A veil of thickened air around them cast,
> That none might know, or see them as they passed.

The common story of Demosthenes's confession that he had taken great pleasure in hearing of a Tanker-woman say as he passed, "This is that Demosthenes," is wonderful ridiculous from so solid an orator. I myself have often met with that temptation to vanity (if it were any), but am so far from finding it any pleasure, that it only makes me run faster from the place, till I get, as it were, out of sight shot. Democritus relates, and in such a manner, as if he gloried in the good

fortune and commodity of it, that when he came to Athens, nobody there did so much as take notice of him ; and Epicurus lived there very well, that is, lay hid many years in his gardens, so famous since that time, with his friend Metrodorus : after whose death, making in one of his letters a kind commemoration of the happiness which they two had enjoyed together, he adds at last, that he thought it no disparagement to those great felicities of their life, that in the midst of the most talked of and talking country in the world, they had lived so long, not only without fame, but almost without being heard of. And yet within a very few years afterward, there were no two names of men more known or more generally celebrated. If we engage into a large acquaintance and various familiarities, we set open our gates to the invaders of most of our time : we expose our life to a Quotidian Ague of frigid impertinences, which would make a wise man tremble to think of. Now, as for being known much by sight, and pointed at, I cannot

comprehend the honour that lies in that. Whatsoever it be, every mountebank has it more than the best doctor, and the hangman more than the Lord Chief Justice of a city. Every creature has it both of nature and art if it be any ways extraordinary. It was as often said, "This is that Bucephalus," or, "This is that Incitatus," when they were led prancing through the streets, as "This is that Alexander," or, "This is that Domitian"; and truly for the latter, I take Incitatus to have been a much more honourable beast than his master, and more deserving the consulship than he the empire. I love and commend a true good fame, because it is the shadow of virtue; not that it doth any good to the body which it accompanies, but 'tis an efficacious shadow, and like that of St. Peter cures the diseases of others. The best kind of glory, no doubt, is that which is reflected from honesty, such as was the glory of Cato and Aristides, but it was harmful to them both, and is seldom beneficial to any man whilst he lives; what it is to him after

his death, I cannot say, because I love not philosophy merely notional and conjectural, and no man who has made the experiment has been so kind as to come back to inform us. Upon the whole matter, I account a person who has a moderate mind and fortune, and lives in the conversation of two or three agreeable friends, with little commerce in the world besides; who is esteemed well enough by his few neighbours that know him, and is truly irreproachable by anybody; and so after a healthful quiet life, before the great inconveniences of old age, goes more silently out of it than he came in (for I would not have him so much as cry in the exit); this innocent deceiver of the word, as Horace calls him, this Muta Persona, I take to have been more happy in his part, than the greatest actors that fill the stage with show and noise, nay, even than Augustus himself, who asked with his last breath, whether he had not played his farce very well.

Seneca, ex Thyeste,
Act 2. Chor.
Stet quicunque volet, potens,
Aulæ culmine lubrico, etc.

Upon the slippery tops of human state,
The gilded pinnacles of fate,
Let others proudly stand, and for a while,
The giddy danger to beguile,
With joy and with disdain look down on all,
Till their heads turn, and down they fall.
Me, O ye gods, on earth, or else so near
That I no fall to earth may fear,
And, O ye gods, at a good distance seat
From the long ruins of the great!
Here wrapped in the arms of quiet let me lie,
Quiet, companion of obscurity.
Here let my life, with as much silence slide,
As time that measures it does glide.
Nor let the breath of infamy or fame,
From town to town echo about my name;
Nor let my homely death embroidered be
With scutcheon or with elegy.

An old plebeian let me die,
Alas, all then are such, as well as I.
To him, alas, to him, I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear;
Who in his life, flattering his senseless pride
By being known to all the world beside,
Does not himself, when he is dying, know;
Nor what he is, nor whither he's to go.

OF AGRICULTURE.

THE first wish of Virgil (as you will find anon by his verses), was to be a good philosopher; the second, a good husbandman; and God (whom he seemed to understand better than most of the most learned heathens) dealt with him just as he did with Solomon: because he prayed for wisdom in the first place, he added all things else which were subordinately to be desired. He made him one of the best philosophers, and best husbandmen, and to adorn and communicate both those faculties, the best poet. He made him, besides all this, a rich man, and a man who desired to be no richer, *O fortunatus nimium et bona qui sua novit.* To be a husbandman, is but a retreat from the city; to be a philosopher, from the world; or rather, a retreat from the world, as it is Man's—into the world, as it is God's. But since Nature denies to

most men the capacity or appetite, and Fortune allows but to a very few the opportunities or possibility, of applying themselves wholly to philosophy, the best mixture of human affairs that we can make are the employments of a country life. It is, as Columella calls it, *Res sine dubitatione proxima et quasi consanguinea sapientiæ*, the nearest neighbour, or rather next in kindred to Philosophy. Varro says the principles of it are the same which Ennius made to be the principles of all nature; earth, water, air, and the sun. It does certainly comprehend more parts of philosophy than any one profession, art, or science in the world besides; and, therefore, Cicero says, the pleasures of a husbandman, *Mihi ad sapientis vitam proxime videntur accedere*, come very nigh to those of a philosopher. There is no other sort of life that affords so many branches of praise to a panegyrist: The utility of it to a man's self; the usefulness, or, rather, necessity of it to all the rest of mankind; the innocence, the pleasure, the antiquity, the dignity. The utility (I mean plainly

the lucre of it) is not so great now in our nation as arises from merchandise and the trading of the city, from whence many of the best estates and chief honours of the kingdom are derived; we have no men now fetched from the plough to be made lords, as they were in Rome to be made consuls and dictators, the reason of which I conceive to be from an evil custom now grown as strong among us as if it were a law, which is, that no men put their children to be bred up apprentices in agriculture, as in other trades, but such who are so poor, that when they come to be men they have not wherewithal to set up in it, and so can only farm some small parcel of ground, the rent of which devours all but the bare subsistence of the tenant; whilst they who are proprietors of the land are either too proud or, for want of that kind of education, too ignorant to improve their estates, though the means of doing it be as easy and certain in this as in any other track of commerce. If there were always two or three thousand youths, for seven or eight years bound to this

profession, that they might learn the whole art of it, and afterwards be enabled to be masters in it, by a moderate stock, I cannot doubt but that we should see as many aldermen's estates made in the country as now we do out of all kind of merchandising in the city. There are as many ways to be rich; and, which is better, there is no possibility to be poor, without such negligence as can neither have excuse nor pity; for a little ground will, without question, feed a little family, and the superfluities of life (which are now in some cases by custom made almost necessary) must be supplied out of the superabundance of art and industry, or contemned by as great a degree of philosophy. As for the necessity of this art, it is evident enough, since this can live without all others, and no one other without this. This is like speech, without which the society of men cannot be preserved; the others like figures and tropes of speech which serve only to adorn it. Many nations have lived, and some do still, without any art but this; not so elegantly, I confess, but still they live; and almost all the

other arts which are here practised are beholding to them for most of their materials. The innocence of this life is in the next thing for which I commend it, and if husbandmen preserve not that, they are much to blame, for no men are so free from the temptations of iniquity. They live by what they can get by industry from the earth, and others by what they can catch by craft from men. They live upon an estate given them by their mother, and others upon an estate cheated from their brethren. They live like sheep and kine, by the allowances of Nature, and others like wolves and foxes by the acquisitions of rapine; and, I hope, I may affirm (without any offence to the great) that sheep and kine are very useful, and that wolves and foxes are pernicious creatures. They are, without dispute, of all men the most quiet and least apt to be inflamed to the disturbance of the commonwealth; their manner of life inclines them, and interest binds them, to love peace. In our late mad and miserable civil wars, all other trades, even to the meanest, set forth whole troops,

and raised up some great commanders, who became famous and mighty for the mischiefs they had done. But I do not remember the name of any one husbandman who had so considerable a share in the twenty years' ruin of his country, as to deserve the curses of his countrymen; and if great delights be joined with so much innocence, I think it is ill done of men not to take them here where they are so tame and ready at hand, rather than hunt for them in courts and cities, where they are so wild and the chase so troublesome and dangerous.

We are here among the vast and noble scenes of Nature; we are there among the pitiful shifts of policy. We walk here in the light and open ways of the divine bounty; we grope there in the dark and confused labyrinths of human malice. Our senses are here feasted with the clear and genuine taste of their objects, which are all sophisticated there, and for the most part overwhelmed with their contraries. Here Pleasure looks, methinks, like a beautiful, constant, and modest wife; it is

there an impudent, fickle, and painted harlot. Here is harmless and cheap plenty, there guilty and expenseful luxury.

I shall only instance in one delight more, the most natural and best natured of all others, a perpetual companion of the husbandman: and that is, the satisfaction of looking round about him, and seeing nothing but the effects and improvements of his own art and diligence; to be always gathering of some fruits of it, and at the same time to behold others ripening, and others budding; to see all his fields and gardens covered with the beauteous creatures of his own industry; and to see, like God, that all his works are good.

> *Hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades; ipsi*
> *Agricolæ tacitum pertentant gaudia pectus.*
>
> On his heart-strings a secret joy does strike.

The antiquity of his art is certainly not to be contested by any other. The three first men in the world were a gardener, a ploughman, and a grazier; and if any man object that the second of these was

a murderer, I desire he would consider, that as soon as he was so, he quitted our profession and turned builder. It is for this reason, I suppose, that Ecclesiasticus forbids us to hate husbandry; because, says he, the Most High has created it. We were all born to this art, and taught by nature to nourish our bodies by the same earth out of which they were made, and to which they must return and pay at last for their sustenance.

Behold the original and primitive nobility of all those great persons who are too proud now not only to till the ground, but almost to tread upon it. We may talk what we please of lilies and lions rampant, and spread eagles in fields d'or or d'argent; but if heraldry were guided by reason, a plough in a field arable would be the most noble and ancient arms.

All these considerations make me fall into the wonder and complaint of Columella, how it should come to pass that all arts or sciences (for the dispute, which is an art and which is a science, does not belong to the curiosity of us husbandmen),

metaphysic, physic, morality, mathematics, logic, rhetoric, etc., which are all, I grant, good and useful faculties, except only metaphysic, which I do not know whether it be anything or no, but even vaulting, fencing, dancing, attiring, cookery, carving, and such like vanities, should all have public schools and masters; and yet that we should never see or hear of any man who took upon him the profession of teaching this so pleasant, so virtuous, so profitable, so honourable, so necessary art.

A man would think, when he's in serious humour, that it were but a vain, irrational, and ridiculous thing for a great company of men and women to run up and down in a room together, in a hundred several postures and figures, to no purpose, and with no design; and therefore dancing was invented first, and only practised anciently, in the ceremonies of the heathen religion, which consisted all in mummery and madness; the latter being the chief glory of the worship, and accounted divine inspiration. This, I say, a severe man would think,

though I dare not determine so far against so customary a part now of good breeding. And yet, who is there among our gentry that does not entertain a dancing master for his children as soon as they are able to walk? But did ever any father provide a tutor for his son to instruct him betimes in the nature and improvements of that land which he intended to leave him? That is at least a superfluity, and this a defect in our manner of education; and therefore I could wish, but cannot in these times much hope to see it, that one college in each university were erected, and appropriated to this study, as well as there are to medicine and the civil law. There would be no need of making a body of scholars and fellows, with certain endowments, as in other colleges; it would suffice if, after the manner of Halls in Oxford, there were only four professors constituted (for it would be too much work for only one master, or Principal, as they call him there) to teach these four parts of it. First, aration, and all things relating to it. Secondly, pasturage; thirdly, gardens, orchards, vineyards,

and woods; fourthly, all parts of rural economy, which would contain the government of bees, swine, poultry, decoys, ponds, etc., and all that which Varro calls Villaticas Pastiones, together with the sports of the field, which ought not to be looked upon only as pleasures, but as parts of housekeeping, and the domestical conservation and uses of all that is brought in by industry abroad. The business of these professors should not be, as is commonly practised in other arts, only to read pompous and superficial lectures out of Virgil's Georgics, Pliny, Varro, or Columella, but to instruct their pupils in the whole method and course of this study, which might be run through perhaps with diligence in a year or two; and the continual succession of scholars upon a moderate taxation for their diet, lodging, and learning, would be a sufficient constant revenue for maintenance of the house and the professors, who should be men not chosen for the ostentation of critical literature, but for solid and experimental knowledge of the things they teach such men; so industrious and public spirited as I conceive Mr.

Hartlib to be, if the gentleman be yet alive. But it is needless to speak further of my thoughts of this design, unless the present disposition of the age allowed more probability of bringing it into execution. What I have further to say of the country life shall be borrowed from the poets, who were always the most faithful and affectionate friends to it. Poetry was born among the shepherds.

Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine musas
Ducit, et immemores non sinit esse sui.

The Muses still love their own native place,
'T has secret charms which nothing can deface.

The truth is, no other place is proper for their work. One might as well undertake to dance in a crowd, as to make good verses in the midst of noise and tumult.

As well might corn as verse in cities grow;
In vain the thankless glebe we plough and sow,
Against th' unnatural soil in vain we strive,
'Tis not a ground in which these plants will thrive.

It will bear nothing but the nettles or thorns of satire, which grow most naturally in the worst earth; and therefore almost all poets, except those who were not able to eat bread without the bounty of great men, that is, without what they could get by flattering of them, have not only withdrawn themselves from the vices and vanities of the grand world (*pariter vitiisque jocisque altius humanis exeruere caput*) into the innocent happiness of a retired life; but have commended and adorned nothing so much by their ever-living poems. Hesiod was the first or second poet in the world that remains yet extant (if Homer, as some think, preceded him, but I rather believe they were contemporaries), and he is the first writer, too, of the art of husbandry. He has contributed, says Columella, not a little to our profession; I suppose he means not a little honour, for the matter of his instructions is not very important. His great antiquity is visible through the gravity and simplicity of his style. The most acute of all his sayings concerns our purpose very much, and is couched in the reverend

obscurity of an oracle. Πλέον ἥμισυ παντός. The half is more than the whole. The occasion of the speech is this: his brother Perses had by corrupting some great men (Βασιλῆας Δωροφάγους, great bribe-eaters he calls them) gotten from him the half of his estate. It is no matter, says he, they have not done me so much prejudice as they imagine.

> Νήπιοι, οὐδ' ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ παντὸς,
> Οὐδ' ὅσον ἐν μαλάχῃ τε καὶ ἀσφοδέλῳ μεγ' ὄνειας,
> Κρύψαντες γὰρ ἔχουσι θεοὶ βίον ἀνθρώποισι.

> Unhappy they to whom God has not revealed
> By a strong light which must their sense control,
> That half a great estate's more than the whole.
> Unhappy, from whom still concealed does lie
> Of roots and herbs the wholesome luxury.

This I conceive to have been honest Hesiod's meaning. From Homer we must not expect much concerning our affairs. He was blind, and could neither work in the country nor enjoy the pleasures of it; his helpless poverty was likeliest to be sustained in the richest places, he was to delight the Grecians with fine tales of the wars and adventures

of their ancestors; his subject removed him from all commerce with us, and yet, methinks, he made a shift to show his goodwill a little. For though he could do us no honour in the person of his hero Ulysses (much less of Achilles), because his whole time was consumed in wars and voyages, yet he makes his father Laertes a gardener all that while, and seeking his consolation for the absence of his son in the pleasure of planting and even dunging his own grounds. Yet, see, he did not contemn us peasants; nay, so far was he from that insolence, that he always styles Eumæus, who kept the hogs with wonderful respect, Δῖον ὕφορβον, the divine swine-herd; he could have done no more for Menelaus or Agamemnon. And Theocritus (a very ancient poet, but he was one of our own tribe, for he wrote nothing but pastorals) gave the same epithet to a husbandman Εμέιβετο Δῖος ἀγρώτης. The divine husbandman replied to Hercules, who was but Δῖος himself. These were civil Greeks, and who understood the dignity of our calling. Among the Romans, we have in the first place our truly divine

Virgil, who, though by the favour of Mæcenas and Augustus he might have been one of the chief men of Rome, yet chose rather to employ much of his time in the exercise, and much of his immortal wit in the praise and instructions of a rustic life; who, though he had written before whole books of Pastorals and Georgics, could not abstain in his great and imperial poem from describing Evander, one of his best princes, as living just after the homely manner of an ordinary countryman. He seats him in a throne of maple, and lays him but upon a bear's skin, the kine and oxen are lowing in his courtyard, the birds under the eaves of his window call him up in the morning; and when he goes abroad only two dogs go along with him for his guard. At last, when he brings Æneas into his royal cottage, he makes him say this memorable compliment, greater than ever yet was spoken at the Escurial, the Louvre, or our Whitehall.

Hæc, inquit, limina victor
Alcides subiit, hæc illum Regia cepit,

Aude, Hospes, contemnere opes, et te quoque dignum
Finge Deo, rebusque veni non asper egenis.

This humble roof, this rustic court, said he,
Received Alcides crowned with victory.
Scorn not, great guest, the steps where he has trod,
But contemn wealth, and imitate a god.

The next man whom we are much obliged to, both for his doctrine and example, is the next best poet in the world to Virgil: his dear friend Horace, who, when Augustus had desired Mecænas to persuade him to come and live domestically and at the same table with him, and to be Secretary of State of the whole world under him, or rather jointly with him (for he says, "*ut nos in Epistolis scribendis adjuvet,*") could not be tempted to forsake his Sabine or Tiburtine Manor, for so rich and so glorious a trouble. There was never, I think, such an example as this in the world, that he should have so much moderation and courage as to refuse an offer of such greatness, and the Emperor so much generosity and good nature as not to be at all offended with his refusal, but to retain still the

same kindness, and express it often to him in most friendly and familiar letters, part of which are still extant. If I should produce all the passages of this excellent author upon the several subjects which I treat of in this book, I must be obliged to translate half his works; of which I may say more truly than, in my opinion, he did of Homer, "*Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non, plenius, et melius Chrysippo, et Crantore dicit.*" I shall content myself upon this particular theme with three only, one out of his Odes, the other out of his Satires, the third out of his Epistles, and shall forbear to collect the suffrages of all other poets, which may be found scattered up and down through all their writings, and especially in Martial's. But I must not omit to make some excuse for the bold undertaking of my own unskilful pencil upon the beauties of a face that has been drawn before by so many great masters, especially that I should dare to do it in Latin verses (though of another kind) and have the confidence to translate them. I can only say that I

love the matter, and that ought to cover many faults; and that I run not to contend with those before me, but follow to applaud them.

VIRG. GEORG.

O fortunatus nimium, etc.

A TRANSLATION OUT OF VIRGIL.

OH happy (if his happiness he knows)
The country swain, on whom kind Heaven bestows
At home all riches that wise Nature needs;
Whom the just earth with easy plenty feeds.
'Tis true, no morning tide of clients comes,
And fills the painted channels of his rooms,
Adoring the rich figures, as they pass,
In tapestry wrought, or cut in living brass;
Nor is his wool superfluously dyed
With the dear poison of Assyrian pride:
Nor do Arabian perfumes vainly spoil
The native use and sweetness of his oil.

Instead of these, his calm and harmless life,
Free from th' alarms of fear, and storms of strife,
Does with substantial blessedness abound,
And the soft wings of peace cover him round :
Through artless grots the murmuring waters glide ;
Thick trees both against heat and cold provide,
From whence the birds salute him ; and his ground
With lowing herds, and bleating sheep does sound ;
And all the rivers, and the forests nigh,
Both food and game and exercise supply.
Here a well-hardened, active youth we see,
Taught the great art of cheerful poverty.
Here, in this place alone, there still do shine
Some streaks of love, both human and divine ;
From hence Astræa took her flight, and here
Still her last footsteps upon earth appear.
'Tis true, the first desire which does control
All the inferior wheels that move my soul,
Is, that the Muse me her high priest would make ;
Into her holiest scenes of mystery take,
And open there to my mind's purgèd eye
Those wonders which to sense the gods deny ;

How in the moon such chance of shapes is found
The moon, the changing world's eternal bound.
What shakes the solid earth, what strong disease
Dares trouble the firm centre's ancient ease ;
What makes the sea retreat, and what advance :
Varieties too regular for chance.
What drives the chariot on of winter's light,
And stops the lazy waggon of the night.
But if my dull and frozen blood deny
To send forth spirits that raise a soul so high ;
In the next place, let woods and rivers be
My quiet, though unglorious, destiny.
In life's cool vale let my low scene be laid ;
Cover me, gods, with Tempe's thickest shade
Happy the man, I grant, thrice happy he
Who can through gross effects their causes see :
Whose courage from the deeps of knowledge springs.
Nor vainly fears inevitable things ;
But does his walk of virtue calmly go,
Through all th' alarms of death and hell below.
Happy ! but next such conquerors, happy they,
Whose humble life lies not in fortune's way.

They unconcerned from their safe distant seat
Behold the rods and sceptres of the great.
The quarrels of the mighty, without fear,
And the descent of foreign troops they hear.
Nor can even Rome their steady course misguide,
With all the lustre of her perishing pride.
Them never yet did strife or avarice draw
Into the noisy markets of the law,
The camps of gownéd war, nor do they live
By rules or forms that many mad men give,
Duty for nature's bounty they repay,
And her sole laws religiously obey.

Some with bold labour plough the faithless main ;
Some rougher storms in princes' courts sustain.
Some swell up their slight sails with popular fame,
Charmed with the foolish whistlings of a name.
Some their vain wealth to earth again commit ;
With endless cares some brooding o'er it sit.
Country and friends are by some wretches sold,
To lie on Tyrian beds and drink in gold ;
No price too high for profit can be shown ;
Not brother's blood, nor hazards of their own.

Around the world in search of it they roam ;
It makes e'en their Antipodes their home.
Meanwhile, the prudent husbandman is found
In mutual duties striving with his ground ;
And half the year he care of that does take
That half the year grateful returns does make
Each fertile month does some new gifts present,
And with new work his industry content :
This the young lamb, that the soft fleece doth yield,
This loads with hay, and that with corn the field :
All sorts of fruit crown the rich autumn's pride :
And on a swelling hill's warm stony side,
The powerful princely purple of the vine,
Twice dyed with the redoubled sun, does shine.
In th' evening to a fair ensuing day,
With joy he sees his flocks and kids to play,
And loaded kine about his cottage stand,
Inviting with known sound the milker's hand ;
And when from wholesome labour he doth come,
With wishes to be there, and wished for home,
He meets at door the softest human blisses,
His chaste wife's welcome, and dear children's kisses.

When any rural holydays invite
His genius forth to innocent delight,
On earth's fair bed beneath some sacred shade,
Amidst his equal friends carelessly laid,
He sings thee, Bacchus, patron of the vine,
The beechen bowl foams with a flood of wine,
Not to the loss of reason or of strength.
To active games and manly sport at length
Their mirth ascends, and with filled veins they see,
Who can the best at better trials be.
Such was the life the prudent Sabine chose,
From such the old Etrurian virtue rose.
Such, Remus and the god his brother led,
From such firm footing Rome grew the world's head.
Such was the life that even till now does raise
The honour of poor Saturn's golden days:
Before men born of earth and buried there,
Let in the sea their mortal fate to share,
Before new ways of perishing were sought,
Before unskilful death on anvils wrought.

Before those beasts which human life sustain,
By men, unless to the gods' use, were slain.

Horat. Epodon.

Beatus ille qui procul, etc.

Happy the man whom bounteous gods allow
With his own hand paternal grounds to plough!
Like the first golden mortals, happy he,
From business and the cares of money free!
No human storms break off at land his sleep,
No loud alarms of nature on the deep.
From all the cheats of law he lives secure,
Nor does th' affronts of palaces endure.
Sometimes the beauteous marriageable vine
He to the lusty bridegroom elm does join;
Sometimes he lops the barren trees around,
And grafts new life into the fruitful wound;
Sometimes he shears his flock, and sometimes he
Stores up the golden treasures of the bee.
He sees his lowing herds walk o'er the plain,
Whilst neighbouring hills low back to them again.

And when the season, rich as well as gay,
All her autumnal bounty does display,
How is he pleas'd th' increasing use to see
Of his well trusted labours bend the tree;
Of which large shares, on the glad sacred days,
He gives to friends, and to the gods repays.
With how much joy does he, beneath some shade
By aged trees, reverend embraces made,
His careless head on the fresh green recline,
His head uncharged with fear or with design.
By him a river constantly complains,
The birds above rejoice with various strains,
And in the solemn scene their orgies keep
Like dreams mixed with the gravity of sleep,
Sleep which does always there for entrance wait,
And nought within against it shuts the gate.
Nor does the roughest season of the sky,
Or sullen Jove, all sports to him deny.
He runs the mazes of the nimble hare,
His well-mouthed dogs' glad concert rends the air,
Or with game bolder, and rewarded more,
He drives into a toil the foaming boar;

Here flies the hawk to assault, and there the net
To intercept the travelling fowl is set ;
And all his malice, all his craft is shown
In innocent wars, on beasts and birds alone.
This is the life from all misfortune free,
From thee, the great one, tyrant love, from thee ;
And if a chaste and clean though homely wife,
Be added to the blessings of this life,—
Such as the ancient sun-burnt Sabines were,
Such as Apulia, frugal still, does bear,—
Who makes her children and the house her care,
And joyfully the work of life does share ;
Nor thinks herself too noble or too fine
To pin the sheepfold or to milk the kine ;
Who waits at door against her husband come
From rural duties, late, and wearied home,
Where she receives him with a kind embrace,
A cheerful fire, and a more cheerful face :
And fills the bowl up to her homely lord,
And with domestic plenty loads the board.
Not all the lustful shell-fish of the sea,
Dressed by the wanton hand of luxury,

Nor ortolans nor godwits nor the rest
Of costly names that glorify a feast,
Are at the princely tables better cheer
Than lamb and kid, lettuce and olives, here.

THE COUNTRY MOUSE.

A Paraphrase upon Horace, II *Book, Satire* VI.

At the large foot of a fair hollow tree,
Close to ploughed ground, seated commodiously,
His ancient and hereditary house,
There dwelt a good substantial country mouse:
Frugal, and grave, and careful of the main,
Yet one who once did nobly entertain
A city mouse, well coated, sleek, and gay,
A mouse of high degree, which lost his way,
Wantonly walking forth to take the air,
And arrived early, and alighted there,
For a day's lodging. The good hearty host

(The ancient plenty of his hall to boast)
Did all the stores produce that might excite,
With various tastes, the courtier's appetite.
Fitches and beans, peason, and oats, and wheat,
And a large chestnut, the delicious meat
Which Jove himself, were he a mouse, would eat.
And for a haut goust there was mixed with these
The sword of bacon, and the coat of cheese,
The precious relics, which at harvest he
Had gathered from the reapers' luxury.
"Freely," said he, "fall on, and never spare,
The bounteous gods will for to-morrow care."
And thus at ease on beds of straw they lay,
And to their genius sacrificed the day.
Yet the nice guest's epicurean mind
(Though breeding made him civil seem, and kind)
Despised this country feast, and still his thought
Upon the cakes and pies of London wrought.
"Your bounty and civility," said he,
"Which I'm surprised in these rude parts to see,
Show that the gods have given you a mind
Too noble for the fate which here you find.

Why should a soul, so virtuous and so great,
Lose itself thus in an obscure retreat?
Let savage beasts lodge in a country den,
You should see towns, and manners know, and men;
And taste the generous luxury of the court,
Where all the mice of quality resort;
Where thousand beauteous shes about you move,
And by high fare are pliant made to love.
We all ere long must render up our breath,
No cave or hole can shelter us from death.
Since life is so uncertain and so short,
Let's spend it all in feasting and in sport.
Come, worthy sir, come with me, and partake
All the great things that mortals happy make."

Alas, what virtue hath sufficient arms
To oppose bright honour and soft pleasure's charms?
What wisdom can their magic force repel?
It draws the reverend hermit from his cell.
It was the time, when witty poets tell,
That Phœbus into Thetis' bosom fell:
She blushed at first, and then put out the light,
And drew the modest curtains of the night.

Plainly the truth to tell, the sun was set,
When to the town our wearied travellers get.
To a lord's house, as lordly as can be,
Made for the use of pride and luxury,
They come ; the gentle courtier at the door
Stops, and will hardly enter in before ;—
But 'tis, sir, your command, and being so,
I'm sworn t' obedience—and so in they go.
Behind a hanging in a spacious room
(The richest work of Mortlake's noble loom)
They wait awhile their wearied limbs to rest,
Till silence should invite them to their feast,
About the hour that Cynthia's silver light
Had touched the pale meridies of the night,
At last, the various supper being done,
It happened that the company was gone
Into a room remote, servants and all,
To please their noble fancies with a ball.
Our host leads forth his stranger, and does find
All fitted to the bounties of his mind.
Still on the table half-filled dishes stood,
And with delicious bits the floor was strewed :

The courteous mouse presents him with the best,
And both with fat varieties are blest.
The industrious peasant everywhere does range,
And thanks the gods for his life's happy change.
Lo, in the midst of a well-freighted pie
They both at last glutted and wanton lie,
When see the sad reverse of prosperous fate,
And what fierce storms on mortal glories wait!
With hideous noise, down the rude servants come,
Six dogs before run barking into th' room;
The wretched gluttons fly with wild affright,
And hate the fulness which retards their flight.
Our trembling peasant wishes now in vain
That rocks and mountains covered him again.
Oh, how the change of his poor life he cursed!
"This, of all lives," said he, "is sure the worst.
Give me again, ye gods, my cave and wood;
With peace, let tares and acorns be my food."

A Paraphrase upon the Eightieth Epistle of the First Book of Horace.

HORACE TO FUSCUS ARISTIUS.

HEALTH, from the lover of the country, me,
Health, to the lover of the city, thee,
A difference in our souls, this only proves,
In all things else, we agree like married doves.
But the warm nest and crowded dove house thou
Dost like; I loosely fly from bough to bough,
And rivers drink, and all the shining day,
Upon fair trees or mossy rocks I play;
In fine, I live and reign when I retire
From all that you equal with heaven admire.
Like one at last from the priest's service fled,
Loathing the honied cakes, I long for bread.
Would I a house for happiness erect,
Nature alone should be the architect.
She'd build it more convenient than great,
And doubtless in the country choose her seat.

Is there a place doth better helps supply
Against the wounds of winter's cruelty?
Is there an air that gentler does assuage
The mad celestial dog's or lion's rage?
Is it not there that sleep (and only there)
Nor noise without, nor cares within does fear?
Does art through pipes a purer water bring
Than that which nature strains into a spring?
Can all your tapestries, or your pictures, show
More beauties than in herbs and flowers do grow?
Fountains and trees our wearied pride do please,
Even in the midst of gilded palaces.
And in your towns that prospect gives delight
Which opens round the country to our sight.
Men to the good, from which they rashly fly,
Return at last, and their wild luxury
Does but in vain with those true joys contend
Which nature did to mankind recommend.
The man who changes gold for burnished brass,
Or small right gems for larger ones of glass,
Is not, at length, more certain to be made
Ridiculous and wretched by the trade,

Than he who sells a solid good to buy
The painted goods of pride and vanity.
If thou be wise, no glorious fortune choose,
Which 't is but pain to keep, yet grief to lose.
For when we place even trifles in the heart,
With trifles too unwillingly we part.
An humble roof, plain bed, and homely board,
More clear, untainted pleasures do afford
Than all the tumult of vain greatness brings
To kings, or to the favourites of kings.
The hornéd deer, by nature armed so well,
Did with the horse in common pasture dwell ;
And when they fought, the field it always won,
Till the ambitious horse begged help of man,
And took the bridle, and thenceforth did reign
Bravely alone, as lord of all the plain :
But never after could the rider get
From off his back, or from his mouth the bit.
So they, who poverty too much do fear,
To avoid that weight, a greater burden bear ;
That they might power above their equals have,
To cruel masters they themselves enslave.

For gold, their liberty exchanged we see,
That fairest flower which crowns humanity.
And all this mischief does upon them light,
Only because they know not how aright
That great, but secret, happiness to prize,
That's laid up in a little, for the wise :
That is the best and easiest estate
Which to a man sits close, but not too strait.
'Tis like a shoe : it pinches, and it burns,
Too narrow; and too large it overturns.
My dearest friend, stop thy desires at last,
And cheerfully enjoy the wealth thou hast.
And, if me still seeking for more you see,
Chide and reproach, despise and laugh at me.
Money was made, not to command our will,
But all our lawful pleasures to fulfil.
Shame and woe to us, if we our wealth obey ;
The horse doth with the horseman run away.

THE COUNTRY LIFE.

Libr. 4, *Plantarum.*

BLEST be the man (and blest he is) whom e'er
(Placed far out of the roads of hope or fear)
A little field and little garden feeds ;
The field gives all that frugal nature needs,
The wealthy garden liberally bestows
All she can ask, when she luxurious grows.
The specious inconveniences, that wait
Upon a life of business and of state,
He sees (nor does the sight disturb his rest)
By fools desired, by wicked men possessed.
Thus, thus (and this deserved great Virgil's praise)
The old Corycian yeoman passed his days,
Thus his wise life Abdolonymus spent :
The ambassadors which the great emperor sent
To offer him a crown, with wonder found
The reverend gardener hoeing of his ground ;
Unwillingly and slow, and discontent,

From his loved cottage to a throne he went.
And oft he stopped in his triumphant way,
And oft looked back, and oft was heard to say,
Not without sighs, "Alas! I there forsake
A happier kingdom than I go to take."
Thus Aglaüs (a man unknown to men,
But the gods knew, and therefore loved him then)
Thus lived obscurely then without a name,
Aglaüs, now consigned to eternal fame.
For Gyges, the rich king, wicked and great,
Presumed at wise Apollo's Delphic seat,
Presumed to ask, "O thou, the whole world's eye,
Seest thou a man that happier is than I?"
The god, who scorned to flatter man, replied,
"Aglaüs happier is." But Gyges cried,
In a proud rage, "Who can that Aglaüs be?
We have heard as yet of no such king as he."
And true it was, through the whole earth around
No king of such a name was to be found.
"Is some old hero of that name alive,
Who his high race does from the gods derive?
Is it some mighty general that has done

Wonders in fight, and god-like honours won?
Is it some man of endless wealth?" said he;
"None, none of these: who can this Aglaüs be?"
After long search, and vain inquiries passed,
In an obscure Arcadian vale at last
(The Arcadian life has always shady been)
Near Sopho's town (which he but once had seen)
This Aglaüs, who monarchs' envy drew,
Whose happiness the gods stood witness to,
This mighty Aglaüs was labouring found,
With his own hands, in his own little ground.

So, gracious God (if it may lawful be,
Among those foolish gods to mention Thee),
So let me act, on such a private stage,
The last dull scenes of my declining age;
After long toils and voyages in vain,
This quiet port let my tossed vessel gain;
Of heavenly rest this earnest to me lend,
Let my life sleep, and learn to love her end.

THE GARDEN.

To J. Evelyn, Esquire.

I NEVER had any other desire so strong, and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always, that I might be master at last of a small house and large garden, with very moderate conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the remainder of my life only to the culture of them and the study of nature.

> And there (with no design beyond my wall) whole and entire to lie,
> In no unactive ease, and no unglorious poverty.

Or, as Virgil has said, shorter and better for me, that I might there *studiis florere ignobilis otii*, though I could wish that he had rather said *Nobilis otii* when he spoke of his own. But several accidents of my ill fortune have disappointed

me hitherto, and do still, of that felicity; for though I have made the first and hardest step to it, by abandoning all ambitions and hopes in this world, and by retiring from the noise of all business and almost company, yet I stick still in the inn of a hired house and garden, among weeds and rubbish, and without that pleasantest work of human industry—the improvement of something which we call (not very properly, but yet we call) our own. I am gone out from Sodom, but I am not arrived at my little Zoar. "Oh, let me escape thither (is it not a little one?), and my soul shall live." I do not look back yet; but I have been forced to stop and make too many halts. You may wonder, sir (for this seems a little too extravagant and Pindarical for prose) what I mean by all this preface. It is to let you know, that though I have missed, like a chemist, my great end, yet I account my affections and endeavours well rewarded by something that I have met with by-the-by, which is, that they have produced to me some part in your kindness and esteem; and

thereby the honour of having my name so advantageously recommended to posterity by the epistle you are pleased to prefix to the most useful book that has been written in that kind, and which is to last as long as months and years.

Among many other arts and excellencies which you enjoy, I am glad to find this favourite of mine the most predominant, that you choose this for your wife, though you have hundreds of other arts for your concubines; though you know them, and beget sons upon them all (to which you are rich enough to allow great legacies), yet the issue of this seems to be designed by you to the main of the estate; you have taken most pleasure in it, and bestowed most charges upon its education, and I doubt not to see that book which you are pleased to promise to the world, and of which you have given us a large earnest in your calendar, as accomplished as anything can be expected from an extraordinary wit and no ordinary expenses and a long experience. I know nobody that possesses more private happiness than you do in your

gardén, and yet no man who makes his happiness more public by a free communication of the art and knowledge of it to others. All that I myself am able yet to do is only to recommend to mankind the search of that felicity which you instruct them how to find and to enjoy.

I.

Happy art thou whom God does bless
With the full choice of thine own happiness;
And happier yet, because thou'rt blessed
With prudence how to choose the best.
In books and gardens thou hast placed aright,—
Things which thou well dost understand,
And both dost make with thy laborious hand—
Thy noble, innocent delight,
And in thy virtuous wife, where thou again dost meet
Both pleasures more refined and sweet:
The fairest garden in her looks,
And in her mind the wisest books.
Oh! who would change these soft, yet solid joys,

For empty shows and senseless noise,
And all which rank ambition breeds,
Which seem such beauteous flowers, and are such poisonous weeds!

II.

When God did man to his own likeness make,
As much as clay, though of the purest kind
By the Great Potter's art refined,
Could the Divine impression take,
He thought it fit to place him where
A kind of heaven, too, did appear,
As far as earth could such a likeness bear.
That Man no happiness might want,
Which earth to her first master could afford,
He did a garden for him plant
By the quick hand of his omnipotent word,
As the chief help and joy of human life,
He gave him the first gift; first, even, before a wife.

III.

For God, the universal architect,
'T had been as easy to erect
A Louvre, or Escurial, or a tower
That might with heaven communication hold,
As Babel vainly thought to do of old.
He wanted not the skill or power,
In the world's fabric those were shown,
And the materials were all his own.
But well he knew what place would best agree
With innocence and with felicity;
And we elsewhere still seek for them in vain.
If any part of either yet remain,
If any part of either we expect,
This may our judgment in the search direct;
God the first garden made, and the first city, Cain.

IV.

Oh, blessèd shades! Oh, gentle, cool retreat
From all the immoderate heat,
In which the frantic world does burn and sweat!
This does the lion-star, Ambition's rage;

This Avarice, the dog-star's thirst assuage;
Everywhere else their fatal power we see,
They make and rule man's wretched destiny;
They neither set nor disappear,
But tyrannise o'er all the year;
Whilst we ne'er feel their flame or influence here.
The birds that dance from bough to bough,
And sing above in every tree,
Are not from fears and cares more free,
Than we who lie, or sit, or walk below,
And should by right be singers too.
What prince's choir of music can excel
That which within this shade does dwell,
To which we nothing pay or give—
They, like all other poets, live
Without reward or thanks for their obliging pains.
'Tis well if they become not prey.
The whistling winds add their less artful strains,
And a grave base the murmuring fountains play.
Nature does all this harmony bestow;
But to our plants, art's music too,
The pipe, theorbo, and guitar we owe;

The lute itself, which once was green and mute,
When Orpheus struck the inspirèd lute,
The trees danced round, and understood
By sympathy the voice of wood.

V.

These are the spells that to kind sleep invite,
And nothing does within resistance make;
Which yet we moderately take;
Who would not choose to be awake,
While he's encompassed round with such delight;
To the ear, the nose, the touch, the taste and sight?
When Venus would her dear Ascanius keep
A prisoner in the downy bands of sleep,
She odorous herbs and flowers beneath him spread,
As the most soft and sweetest bed;
Not her own lap would more have charmed his head.
Who that has reason and his smell
Would not among roses and jasmine dwell,
Rather than all his spirits choke,
With exhalations of dirt and smoke,

And all the uncleanness which does drown
In pestilential clouds a populous town?
The earth itself breathes better perfumes here,
Than all the female men or women there,
Not without cause, about them bear.

VI.

When Epicurus to the world had taught
That pleasure was the chiefest good,
(And was perhaps i' th' right, if rightly understood)
His life he to his doctrine brought,
And in a garden's shade that sovereign pleasure sought.
Whoever a true epicure would be,
May there find cheap and virtuous luxury.
Vitellius his table, which did hold
As many creatures as the Ark of old,
That fiscal table, to which every day
All countries did a constant tribute pay,
Could nothing more delicious afford
Than Nature's liberality,
Helped with a little art and industry,

Allows the meanest gardener's board.
The wanton taste no fish or fowl can choose
For which the grape or melon she would lose,
Though all the inhabitants of sea and air
Be listed in the glutton's bill of fare;
Yet still the fruits of earth we see
Placed the third storey high in all her luxury.

VII.

But with no sense the garden does comply,
None courts or flatters, as it does the eye;
When the great Hebrew king did almost strain
The wondrous treasures of his wealth and brain
His royal southern guest to entertain,
Though she on silver floors did tread,
With bright Assyrian carpets on them spread
To hide the metal's poverty;
Though she looked up to roofs of gold,
And nought around her could behold
But silk and rich embroidery,
And Babylonian tapestry,
And wealthy Hiram's princely dye:

Though Ophir's starry stones met everywhere her eye;
Though she herself and her gay host were dressed
With all the shining glories of the East;
When lavish art her costly work had done;
The honour and the prize of bravery
Was by the Garden from the Palace won;
And every rose and lily there did stand
Better attired by Nature's hand:
The case thus judged against the king we see,
By one that would not be so rich, though wiser far than he.

VIII.

Nor does this happy place only dispense
Such various pleasures to the sense:
Here health itself does live,
That salt of life, which does to all a relish give,
Its standing pleasure, and intrinsic wealth,
The body's virtue, and the soul's good fortune, health.
The tree of life, when it in Eden stood,

Did its immortal head to heaven rear ;
It lasted a tall cedar till the flood ;
Now a small thorny shrub it does appear ;
Nor will it thrive too everywhere :
It always here is freshest seen,
'Tis only here an evergreen.
If through the strong and beauteous fence
Of temperance and innocence,
And wholesome labours and a quiet mind,
Any diseases passage find,
They must not think here to assail
A land unarmèd, or without a guard ;
They must fight for it, and dispute it hard,
Before they can prevail.
Scarce any plant is growing here
Which against death some weapon does not bear,
Let cities boast that they provide
For life the ornaments of pride ;
But 'tis the country and the field
That furnish it with staff and shield.

IX.

Where does the wisdom and the power divine
In a more bright and sweet reflection shine?
Where do we finer strokes and colours see
Of the Creator's real poetry,
  Than when we with attention look
Upon the third day's volume of the book?
If we could open and intend our eye,
  We all like Moses should espy
Even in a bush the radiant Deity.
But we despise these his inferior ways
Though no less full of miracle and praise;
  Upon the flowers of heaven we gaze,
The stars of earth no wonder in us raise,
  Though these perhaps do more than they
    The life of mankind sway.
Although no part of mighty Nature be
More stored with beauty, power, and mystery,
Yet to encourage human industry,
God has so ordered that no other part
Such space and such dominion leaves for art.

X.

We nowhere art do so triumphant see,
As when it grafts or buds the tree ;
In other things we count it to excel,
If it a docile scholar can appear
To Nature, and but imitate her well :
It over-rules, and is her master here.
It imitates her Maker's power divine,
And changes her sometimes, and sometimes does refine :
It does, like grace, the fallen tree restore
To its blest state of Paradise before :
Who would not joy to see his conquering hand
O'er all the vegetable world command,
And the wild giants of the wood receive
What laws he's pleased to give ?
He bids the ill-natured crab produce
The gentler apple's winy juice,
The golden fruit that worthy is,
Of Galatea's purple kiss ;
He does the savage hawthorn teach

To bear the medlar and the pear;
He bids the rustic plum to rear
A noble trunk, and be a peach.
Even Daphne's coyness he does mock,
And weds the cherry to her stock,
Though she refused Apollo's suit,
Even she, that chaste and virgin tree,
Now wonders at herself to see
That she's a mother made, and blushes in her fruit.

XI.

Methinks I see great Diocletian walk
In the Salonian garden's noble shade,
Which by his own imperial hands was made:
I see him smile, methinks, as he does talk
With the ambassadors, who come in vain,
To entice him to a throne again.
"If I, my friends," said he, "should to you show
All the delights which in these gardens grow;
'Tis likelier much that you should with me stay,
Than 'tis that you should carry me away;

And trust me not, my friends, if every day
I walk not here with more delight,
Than ever, after the most happy fight,
In triumph to the Capitol I rode,
To thank the gods, and to be thought myself almost
a god.

OF GREATNESS.

Since we cannot attain to greatness, says the Sieur de Montaigne, let us have our revenge by railing at it; this he spoke but in jest. I believe he desired it no more than I do, and had less reason, for he enjoyed so plentiful and honourable a fortune in a most excellent country, as allowed him all the real conveniences of it, separated and purged from the incommodities. If I were but in his condition, I should think it hard measure, without being convinced of any crime, to be sequestered from it and made one of the principal officers of state. But the reader may think that what I now say is of small authority, because I never was, nor ever shall be, put to the trial; I can therefore only make my protestation.

> If ever I more riches did desire
> Than cleanliness and quiet do require;

> If e'er ambition did my fancy cheat,
> With any wish so mean as to be great,
> Continue, Heaven, still from me to remove
> The humble blessings of that life I love.

I know very many men will despise, and some pity me, for this humour, as a poor-spirited fellow; but I am content, and, like Horace, thank God for being so. *Dii bene fecerunt inopis me, quodque pusilli finxerunt animi.* I confess I love littleness almost in all things. A little convenient estate, a little cheerful house, a little company, and a very little feast; and if I were ever to fall in love again (which is a great passion, and therefore I hope I have done with it) it would be, I think, with prettiness rather than with majestical beauty. I would neither wish that my mistress, nor my fortune, should be a bona roba, nor, as Homer used to describe his beauties, like a daughter of great Jupiter, for the stateliness and largeness of her person, but, as Lucretius says, "*Parvula, pumilio,* Χαρίτων μία, *tota merum sal.*"

Where there is one man of this, I believe there

are a thousand of Senecio's mind, whose ridiculous affectation of grandeur Seneca the elder describes to this effect. Senecio was a man of a turbid and confused wit, who could not endure to speak any but mighty words and sentences, till this humour grew at last into so notorious a habit, or rather disease, as became the sport of the whole town: he would have no servants but huge massy fellows, no plate or household stuff but thrice as big as the fashion; you may believe me, for I speak it without raillery, his extravagancy came at last into such a madness that he would not put on a pair of shoes each of which was not big enough for both his feet; he would eat nothing but what was great, nor touch any fruit but horse-plums and pound-pears. He kept a concubine that was a very giantess, and made her walk, too, always in chiopins, till at last he got the surname of Senecio Grandio, which, Messala said, was not his cognomen, but his cognomentum. When he declaimed for the three hundred Lacedæmonians, who also opposed Xerxes' army of above three hundred

thousand, he stretched out his arms and stood on tiptoes, that he might appear the taller, and cried out in a very loud voice, "I rejoice, I rejoice!', We wondered, I remember, what new great fortune had befallen his eminence. "Xerxes," says he, "is all mine own. He who took away the sight of the sea with the canvas veils of so many ships. . ." and then he goes on so, as I know not what to make of the rest, whether it be the fault of the edition, or the orator's own burly way of nonsense.

This is the character that Seneca gives of this hyperbolical fop, whom we stand amazed at, and yet there are very few men who are not, in some things, and to some degree, grandios. Is anything more common than to see our ladies of quality wear such high shoes as they cannot walk in without one to lead them? and a gown as long again as their body, so that they cannot stir to the next room without a page or two to hold it up? I may safely say that all the ostentation of our grandees is just like a train, of no use in the world, but horribly cumbersome and incommodious. What is

all this but spice of *grandio?* How tedious would this be if we were always bound to it? I do believe there is no king who would not rather be deposed than endure every day of his reign all the ceremonies of his coronation. The mightiest princes are glad to fly often from these majestic pleasures (which is, methinks, no small disparagement to them), as it were for refuge, to the most contemptible divertisements and meanest recreations of the vulgar, nay, even of children. One of the most powerful and fortunate princes of the world of late, could find out no delight so satisfactory as the keeping of little singing birds, and hearing of them and whistling to them. What did the emperors of the whole world? If ever any men had the free and full enjoyment of all human greatness (nay, that would not suffice, for they would be gods too) they certainly possessed it; and yet one of them, who styled himself "Lord and God of the Earth," could not tell how to pass his whole day pleasantly, without spending constant two or three hours in catching of flies, and killing

them with a bodkin, as if his godship had been Beelzebub. One of his predecessors, Nero (who never put any bounds, nor met with any stop to his appetite), could divert himself with no pastime more agreeable than to run about the streets all night in a disguise, and abuse the women and affront the men whom he met, and sometimes to beat them, and sometimes to be beaten by them. This was one of his imperial nocturnal pleasures; his chiefest in the day was to sing and play upon a fiddle, in the habit of a minstrel, upon the public stage; he was prouder of the garlands that were given to his divine voice (as they called it then) in those kind of prizes, than all his forefathers were of their triumphs over nations. He did not at his death complain that so mighty an emperor, and the last of all the Cæsarian race of deities, should be brought to so shameful and miserable an end, but only cried out, "Alas! what pity it is that so excellent a musician should perish in this manner!" His uncle Claudius spent half his time at playing at dice;

that was the main fruit of his sovereignty. I omit the madnesses of Caligula's delights, and the execrable sordidness of those of Tiberius. Would one think that Augustus himself, the highest and most fortunate of mankind, a person endowed too with many excellent parts of nature, should be so hard put to it sometimes for want of recreations, as to be found playing at nuts and bounding-stones with little Syrian and Moorish boys, whose company he took delight in, for their prating and their wantonness?

> Was it for this, that Rome's best blood he spilt,
> With so much falsehood, so much guilt?
> Was it for this that his ambition strove
> To equal Cæsar first, and after Jove?
> Greatness is barren sure of solid joys;
> Her merchandise, I fear, is all in toys;
> She could not else sure so uncivil be,
> To treat his universal majesty,
> His new created Deity,
> With nuts and bounding-stones and boys.

But we must excuse her for this meagre entertainment; she has not really wherewithal to make such feasts as we imagine; her guests must be

contented sometimes with but slender cates, and with the same cold meats served over and over again, even till they become nauseous. When you have pared away all the vanity, what solid and natural contentment does there remain which may not be had with five hundred pounds a year? not so many servants or horses, but a few good ones, which will do all the business as well; not so many choice dishes at every meal, but at several meals all of them, which makes them both the more healthy and the more pleasant; not so rich garments nor so frequent changes, but as warm and as comely, and so frequent change, too, as is every jot as good for the master, though not for the tailor or valet-de-chambre; not such a stately palace, nor gilt rooms, nor the costlier sorts of tapestry, but a convenient brick house, with decent wainscot and pretty forest-work hangings. Lastly (for I omit all other particulars, and will end with that which I love most in both conditions), not whole woods cut in walks, nor vast parks, nor fountain or cascade gardens, but herb and flower and fruit

gardens, which are more useful, and the water every whit as clear and wholesome as if it darted from the breasts of a marble nymph or the urn of a river-god. If for all this you like better the substance of that former estate of life, do but consider the inseparable accidents of both: servitude, disquiet, danger, and most commonly guilt, inherent in the one; in the other, liberty, tranquillity, security, and innocence: and when you have thought upon this, you will confess that to be a truth which appeared to you before but a ridiculous paradox, that a low fortune is better guarded and attended than a high one. If, indeed, we look only upon the flourishing head of the tree, it appears a most beautiful object.

——— *Sed quantum vertice ad auras*
Ætherias, tantum radice ad Tartara tendit.

As far up towards heaven the branches grow,
So far the root sinks down to hell below.

Another horrible disgrace to greatness is, that it is for the most part in pitiful want and distress

What a wonderful thing is this, unless it degenerate into avarice, and so cease to be greatness. It falls perpetually into such necessities as drive it into all the meanest and most sordid ways of borrowing, cozenage, and robbery, *Mancipiis locopules, eget aris Cappadocum Rex.* This is the case of almost all great men, as well as of the poor King of Cappadocia. They abound with slaves, but are indigent of money. The ancient Roman emperors, who had the riches of the whole world for their revenue, had wherewithal to live, one would have thought, pretty well at ease, and to have been exempt from the pressures of extreme poverty. But yet with most of them it was much otherwise, and they fell perpetually into such miserable penury, that they were forced to devour or squeeze most of their friends and servants, to cheat with infamous projects, to ransack and pillage all their provinces. This fashion of imperial grandeur is imitated by all inferior and subordinate sorts of it, as if it were a point of honour. They must be cheated of a third part of their estates, two other

thirds they must expend in vanity, so that they remain debtors for all the necessary provisions of life, and have no way to satisfy those debts but out of the succours and supplies of rapine ; "as riches increase," says Solomon, "so do the mouths that devour it." The master mouth has no more than before ; the owner, methinks, is like Oenus in the fable, who is perpetually winding a rope of hay and an ass at the end perpetually eating it. Out of these inconveniences arises naturally one more, which is, that no greatness can be satisfied or contented with itself : still, if it could mount up a little higher, it would be happy ; if it could but gain that point, it would obtain all its desires ; but yet at last, when it is got up to the very top of the peak of Teneriffe, it is in very great danger of breaking its neck downwards, but in no possibility of ascending upwards into the seat of tranquillity above the moon. The first ambitious men in the world, the old giants, are said to have made an heroical attempt of scaling Heaven in despite of the gods, and they cast Ossa upon Olympus and Pelion upon Ossa,

two or three mountains more they thought would have done their business, but the thunder spoiled all the work when they were come up to the third storey ;

> And what a noble plot was crossed,
> And what a brave design was lost.

A famous person of their offspring, the late giant of our nation, when, from the condition of a very inconsiderable captain, he had made himself lieutenant-general of an army of little Titans, which was his first mountain ; and afterwards general, which was his second ; and after that absolute tyrant of three kingdoms, which was the third, and almost touched the heaven which he affected ; is believed to have died with grief and discontent because he could not attain to the honest name of a king, and the old formality of a crown, though he had before exceeded the power by a wicked usurpation. If he could have compassed that, he would perhaps have wanted something else that is necessary to felicity, and pined away for the want of the title of an emperor or a god.

The reason of this is, that greatness has no reality in nature, but is a creature of the fancy—a notion that consists only in relation and comparison. It is indeed an idol; but St. Paul teaches us that an idol is nothing in the world. There is in truth no rising or meridian of the sun, but only in respect to several places: there is no right or left, no upper hand in nature; everything is little and everything is great according as it is diversely compared. There may be perhaps some villages in Scotland or Ireland where I might be a great man; and in that case I should be like Cæsar—you would wonder how Cæsar and I should be like one another in anything—and choose rather to be the first man of the village than second at Rome. Our country is called Great Britain, in regard only of a lesser of the same name; it would be but a ridiculous epithet for it when we consider it together with the kingdom of China. That, too, is but a pitiful rood of ground in comparison of the whole earth besides; and this whole globe of earth, which we account so immense a body, is but one point or

atom in relation to those numberless worlds that are scattered up and down in the infinite space of the sky which we behold. The other many inconveniences of grandeur I have spoken of dispersedly in several chapters, and shall end this with an ode of Horace, not exactly copied but rudely imitated.

HORACE. LIB. 3. ODE 1.

Odi profanum vulgus, etc.

I.

HENCE, ye profane; I hate ye all;
Both the great vulgar, and the small.
To virgin minds, which yet their native whiteness hold,
Not yet discoloured with the love of gold
(That jaundice of the soul,
Which makes it look so gilded and so foul),
To you, ye very few, these truths I tell;
The muse inspires my song, hark, and observe it well.

II.

We look on men, and wonder at such odds
'Twixt things that were the same by birth;
We look on kings as giants of the earth,
These giants are but pigmies to the gods.
The humblest bush and proudest oak
Are but of equal proof against the thunder-stroke.
Beauty and strength, and wit, and wealth, and power
Have their short flourishing hour,
And love to see themselves, and smile,
And joy in their pre-eminence a while;
Even so in the same land,
Poor weeds, rich corn, gay flowers together stand;
Alas, death mows down all with an impartial hand.

III.

And all you men, whom greatness does so please,
Ye feast, I fear, like Damocles.
If you your eyes could upwards move,
(But you, I fear, think nothing is above)
You would perceive by what a little thread

The sword still hangs over your head.
No tide of wine would drown your cares,
No mirth or music over-noise your fears;
The fear of death would you so watchful keep,
As not to admit the image of it, sleep.

IV.

Sleep is a god too proud to wait in palaces;
And yet so humble, too, as not to scorn
The meanest country cottages;
His poppy grows among the corn.
The halcyon sleep will never build his nest
In any stormy breast.
'Tis not enough that he does find
Clouds and darkness in their mind;
Darkness but half his work will do,
'Tis not enough; he must find quiet too.

V.

The man who, in all wishes he does make,
Does only Nature's counsel take,
That wise and happy man will never fear

The evil aspects of the year,
Nor tremble, though two comets should appear.
He does not look in almanacks to see,
Whether he fortunate shall be ;
Let Mars and Saturn in the heavens conjoin,
And what they please against the world design,
So Jupiter within him shine.

VI.

If of their pleasures and desires no end be found ;
God to their cares and fears will set no bound.
What would content you ? Who can tell ?
Ye fear so much to lose what you have got
As if ye liked it well.
Ye strive for more, as if ye liked it not.
Go, level hills, and fill up seas,
Spare nought that may your wanton fancy please ;
But trust me, when you have done all this,
Much will be missing still, and much will be amiss.

OF AVARICE.

THERE are two sorts of avarice; the one is but of a bastard kind; and that is, the rapacious appetite of gain, not for its own sake, but for the pleasure of refunding it immediately through all the channels of pride and luxury. The other is the true kind, and properly so called; which is a restless and unsatiable desire of riches, not for any further end of use, but only to hoard, and preserve, and perpetually increase them. The covetous man of the first kind is like a greedy ostrich, which devours any metal, but it is with an intent to feed upon it, and in effect it makes a shift to digest and excern it. The second is like the foolish chough, which loves to steal money only to hide it. The first does much harm to mankind, and a little good too, to some few. The second does good to none; no, not to himself. The first can make no excuse

to God, or angels, or rational men for his actions. The second can give no reason or colour, not to the devil himself, for what he does: he is a slave to Mammon without wages. The first makes a shift to be beloved; aye, and envied, too, by some people. The second is the universal object of hatred and contempt. There is no vice has been so pelted with good sentences, and especially by the poets, who have pursued it with stories and fables, and allegories and allusions; and moved, as we say, every stone to fling at it, among all which, I do not remember a more fine and gentleman-like correction than that which was given it by one line of Ovid's.

Desunt luxuriæ multa, avaritiæ omnia.

Much is wanting to luxury; all to avarice

To which saying I have a mind to add one member and render it thus:—

Poverty wants some, luxury many, avarice all things.

Somebody says of a virtuous and wise man, that

having nothing, he has all. This is just his antipode, who, having all things, yet has nothing. He is a guardian eunuch to his beloved gold: *Audivi eos amatores esse maximos sed nil potesse.* They are the fondest lovers, but impotent to enjoy.

> And, oh, what man's condition can be worse
> Than his, whom plenty starves, and blessings curse?
> The beggars but a common fate deplore,
> The rich poor man 's emphatically poor.

I wonder how it comes to pass that there has never been any law made against him. Against him, do I say? I mean for him, as there is a public provision made for all other madmen. It is very reasonable that the king should appoint some persons (and I think the courtiers would not be against this proposition) to manage his estate during his life (for his heirs commonly need not that care), and out of it to make it their business to see that he should not want alimony befitting his condition, which he could never get out of his own

cruel fingers. We relieve idle vagrants and counterfeit beggars, but have no care at all of these really poor men, who are, methinks, to be respectfully treated in regard of their quality. I might be endless against them, but I am almost choked with the superabundance of the matter. Too much plenty impoverishes me as it does them. I will conclude this odious subject with part of Horace's first Satire, which take in his own familiar style :—

I admire, Mæcenas, how it comes to pass,
That no man ever yet contented was,
Nor is, nor perhaps will be, with that state
In which his own choice plants him, or his fate.
Happy the merchant ! the old soldier cries.
The merchant, beaten with tempestuous skies
Happy the soldier ! one half-hour to thee
Gives speedy death or glorious victory.
The lawyer, knocked up early from his rest
By restless clients, calls the peasant blest.
The peasant, when his labours ill succeed,

Envies the mouth which only talk does feed.
'Tis not, I think you'll say, that I want store
Of instances, if here I add no more,
They are enough to reach at least a mile
Beyond long Orator Fabius his style.
But hold, you whom no fortune e'er endears,
Gentlemen, malcontents, and mutineers,
Who bounteous Jove so often cruel call,
Behold, Jove's now resolved to please you all.
Thou, soldier, be a merchant; merchant, thou
A soldier be; and lawyer to the plough.
Change all your stations straight. Why do they stay?
The devil a man will change now when he may.
Were I in General Jove's abused case,
By Jove, I'd cudgel this rebellious race;
But he's too good; be all, then, as you were;
However, make the best of what you are,
And in that state be cheerful and rejoice,
Which either was your fate or was your choice.
No; they must labour yet, and sweat and toil,
And very miserable be awhile.

But 'tis with a design only to gain
What may their age with plenteous ease maintain;
The prudent pismire does this lesson teach,
And industry to lazy mankind preach.
The little drudge does trot about and sweat,
Nor does he straight devour all he can get,
But in his temperate mouth carries it home,
A stock for winter which he knows must come.
And when the rolling world to creatures here
Turns up the deformed wrong side of the year,
And shuts him in with storms and cold and wet,
He cheerfully does his past labours eat.
Oh, does he so? your wise example, the ant
Does not at all times rest, and plenty want.
But, weighing justly a mortal ant's condition,
Divides his life 'twixt labour and fruition.
Thee neither heat, nor storms, nor wet, nor cold
From thy unnatural diligence can withhold,
To the Indies thou wouldst run rather than see
Another, though a friend, richer than thee.

Fond man ! what good or beauty can be found
In heaps of treasure buried under ground ?
Which, rather than diminished e'er to see,
Thou wouldst thyself, too, buried with them be
And what's the difference ? is't not quite as bad
Never to use, as never to have had ?
In thy vast barns millions of quarters store,
Thy belly, for all that, will hold no more
Than mine does. Every baker makes much bread,
What then ? He's with no more than others fed.
Do you within the bounds of Nature live,
And to augment your own you need not strive ;
One hundred acres will no less for you
Your life's whole business than ten thousand do.
But pleasant 'tis to take from a great store ;
What, man ? though you're resolved to take no more
Than I do from a small one ; if your will
Be but a pitcher or a pot to fill,
To some great river for it must you go,
When a clear spring just at your feet does flow ?

Give me the spring which does to human use,
Safe, easy, and untroubled stores produce;
He who scorns these, and needs will drink at Nile,
Must run the danger of the crocodile;
And of the rapid stream itself which may,
At unawares bear him perhaps away.
In a full flood Tantalus stands, his skin
Washed o'er in vain, for ever dry within;
He catches at the stream with greedy lips,
From his touched mouth the wanton torment slips.
You laugh now, and expand your careful brow:
'Tis finely said, but what's all this to you?
Change but the name, this fable is thy story,
Thou in a flood of useless wealth dost glory,
Which thou canst only touch, but never taste;
The abundance still, and still the want does last.
The treasures of the gods thou wouldst not spare,
But when they're made thine own, they sacred are,
And must be kept with reverence, as if thou
No other use of precious gold didst know

But that of curious pictures to delight
With the fair stamp thy virtuoso sight.
The only true and genuine use is this,
To buy the things which nature cannot miss
Without discomfort, oil, and vital bread,
And wine by which the life of life is fed,
And all those few things else by which we live
All that remains is given for thee to give.
If cares and troubles, envy, grief, and fear,
The bitter fruits be which fair riches bear,
If a new poverty grow out of store,
The old plain way, ye gods! let me be poor.

A Paraphrase on an Ode in Horace's Third Book, beginning thus :—

"*Inclusam Danaen turris ahenea.*"

A tower of brass, one would have said,
And locks, and bolts, and iron bars,
And guards as strict as in the heat of wars

Might have preserved one innocent maidenhood.
The jealous father thought he well might spare
All further jealous care;
And as he walked, to himself alone he smiled
To think how Venus' arts he had beguiled;
And when he slept his rest was deep,
But Venus laughed to see and hear him sleep.
She taught the amorous Jove
A magical receipt in love,
Which armed him stronger and which helped him more
Than all his thunder did and his almightyship before.

II.

She taught him love's elixir, by which art
His godhead into gold he did convert;
No guards did then his passage stay,
He passed with ease, gold was the word;
Subtle as lightning, bright, and quick, and fierce,
Gold through doors and walls did pierce;
And as that works sometimes upon the sword,

Melted the maiden dread away,
Even in the secret scabbard where it lay.
The prudent Macedonian king,
To blow up towns, a golden mine did spring ;
He broke through gates with this petar,
'Tis the great art of peace, the engine 'tis of war,
And fleets and armies follow it afar ;
The ensign 'tis at land, and 'tis the seaman's star.

III.

Let all the world slave to this tyrant be,
Creature to this disguisèd deity,
Yet it shall never conquer me.
A guard of virtues will not let it pass,
And wisdom is a tower of stronger brass.
The muses' laurel, round my temples spread,
Does from this lightning's force secure my head,
Nor will I lift it up so high,
As in the violent meteor's way to lie.
Wealth for its power do we honour and adore?
The things we hate, ill fate, and death, have more.

IV.

From towns and courts, camps of the rich and great,
The vast Xerxean army, I retreat,
And to the small Laconic forces fly
Which hold the straits of poverty.
Cellars and granaries in vain we fill
With all the bounteous summer's store:
If the mind thirst and hunger still,
The poor rich man 's emphatically poor.
Slaves to the things we too much prize,
We masters grow of all that we despise.

V.

A field of corn, a fountain, and a wood,
Is all the wealth by nature understood.
The monarch on whom fertile Nile bestows
All which that grateful earth can bear,
Deceives himself, if he suppose
That more than this falls to his share.
Whatever an estate does beyond this afford,
Is not a rent paid to the Lord;

But is a tax illegal and unjust,
Exacted from it by the tyrant lust.
Much will always wanting be,
To him who much desires. Thrice happy he
To whom the wise indulgency of Heaven,
With sparing hand but just enough has given.

THE DANGERS OF AN HONEST MAN IN MUCH COMPANY.

If twenty thousand naked Americans were not able to resist the assaults of but twenty well-armed Spaniards, I see little possibility for one honest man to defend himself against twenty thousand knaves, who are all furnished *cap-à-pie* with the defensive arms of worldly prudence, and the offensive, too, of craft and malice. He will find no less odds than this against him if he have much to do in human affairs. The only advice, therefore, which I can give him is, to be sure not to venture his person any longer in the open campaign, to retreat and entrench himself, to stop up all avenues, and draw up all bridges against so numerous an enemy. The truth of it is, that a man in much business must either make himself a knave, or else the world will make him a fool: and if the injury

went no farther than the being laughed at, a wise man would content himself with the revenge of retaliation; but the case is much worse, for these civil cannibals too, as well as the wild ones, not only dance about such a taken stranger, but at last devour him. A sober man cannot get too soon out of drunken company; though they be never so kind and merry among themselves, it is not unpleasant only, but dangerous to him. Do ye wonder that a virtuous man should love to be alone? It is hard for him to be otherwise; he is so, when he is among ten thousand; neither is the solitude so uncomfortable to be alone without any other creature, as it is to be alone in the midst of wild beasts. Man is to man all kind of beasts—a fawning dog, a roaring lion, a thieving fox, a robbing wolf, a dissembling crocodile, a treacherous decoy, and a rapacious vulture. The civilest, methinks, of all nations, are those whom we account the most barbarous; there is some moderation and good nature in the Toupinambaltians who eat no men but their enemies, whilst we learned and

polite and Christian Europeans, like so many pikes and sharks, prey upon everything that we can swallow. It is the great boast of eloquence and philosophy, that they first congregated men dispersed, united them into societies, and built up the houses and the walls of cities. I wish they could unravel all they had woven; that we might have our woods and our innocence again instead of our castles and our policies. They have assembled many thousands of scattered people into one body: it is true, they have done so, they have brought them together into cities to cozen, and into armies to murder one another; they found them hunters and fishers of wild creatures, they have made them hunters and fishers of their brethren; they boast to have reduced them to a state of peace, when the truth is they have only taught them an art of war; they have framed, I must confess, wholesome laws for the restraint of vice, but they raised first that devil which now they conjure and cannot bind; though there were before no punishments for wickedness, yet there was less committed

because there were no rewards for it. But the men who praise philosophy from this topic are much deceived; let oratory answer for itself, the tinkling, perhaps, of that may unite a swarm: it never was the work of philosophy to assemble multitudes, but to regulate only, and govern them when they were assembled, to make the best of an evil, and bring them, as much as is possible, to unity again. Avarice and ambition only were the first builders of towns, and founders of empire; they said, "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth." What was the beginning of Rome, the metropolis of all the world? what was it but a concourse of thieves, and a sanctuary of criminals? it was justly named by the augury of no less than twelve vultures, and the founder cemented his walls with the blood of his brother. Not unlike to this was the beginning even of the first town, too, in the world, and such is the original sin of most cities: their actual increase

daily with their age and growth; the more people, the more wicked all of them. Every one brings in his part to inflame the contagion, which becomes at last so universal and so strong, that no precepts can be sufficient preservatives, nor anything secure our safety, but flight from among the infected. We ought, in the choice of a situation, to regard above all things the healthfulness of the place, and the healthfulness of it for the mind rather than for the body. But suppose (which is hardly to be supposed) we had antidote enough against this poison; nay, suppose, further, we were always and at all places armed and provided both against the assaults of hostility and the mines of treachery, it will yet be but an uncomfortable life to be ever in alarms; though we were compassed round with fire to defend ourselves from wild beasts, the lodging would be unpleasant, because we must always be obliged to watch that fire, and to fear no less the defects of our guard than the diligences of our enemy. The sum of this is, that a virtuous man is in danger to be trod upon and destroyed in the

crowd of his contraries; nay, which is worse, to be changed and corrupted by them, and that it is impossible to escape both these inconveniences without so much caution as will take away the whole quiet, that is, the happiness of his life. Ye see, then, what he may lose; but, I pray, what can he get there? *Quid Romæ faciam? Mentiri nescio.* What should a man of truth and honesty do at Rome? he can neither understand, nor speak the language of the place; a naked man may swim in the sea, but it is not the way to catch fish there; they are likelier to devour him than he them, if he bring no nets and use no deceits. I think, therefore, it was wise and friendly advice which Martial gave to Fabian when he met him newly arrived at Rome.

Honest and poor, faithful in word and thought;
What has thee, Fabian, to the city brought?
Thou neither the buffoon nor bawd canst play,
Nor with false whispers the innocent betray:
Nor corrupt wives, nor from rich beldams get
A living by thy industry and sweat:
Nor with vain promises and projects cheat,

Nor bribe or flatter any of the great.
But you're a man of learning, prudent, just:
A man of courage, firm, and fit for trust.
Why, you may stay, and live unenvied here;
But, 'faith! go back, and keep you where you were.

Nay, if nothing of all this were in the case, yet the very sight of uncleanness is loathsome to the cleanly; the sight of folly and impiety vexatious to the wise and pious.

Lucretius, by his favour, though a good poet, was but an ill-natured man, when he said, "It was delightful to see other men in a great storm." And no less ill-natured should I think Democritus, who laughed at all the world, but that he retired himself so much out of it that we may perceive he took no great pleasure in that kind of mirth. I have been drawn twice or thrice by company to go to Bedlam, and have seen others very much delighted with the fantastical extravagancy of so many various madnesses, which upon me wrought so contrary an effect, that I always returned not only melancholy, but even sick with

the sight. My compassion there was perhaps too tender, for I meet a thousand madmen abroad, without any perturbation, though, to weigh the matter justly, the total loss of reason is less deplorable than the total depravation of it. An exact judge of human blessings, of riches, honours, beauty, even of wit itself, should pity the abuse of them more than the want.

Briefly, though a wise man could pass never so securely through the great roads of human life, yet he will meet perpetually with so many objects and occasions of compassion, grief, shame, anger, hatred, indignation, and all passions but envy (for he will find nothing to deserve that) that he had better strike into some private path; nay, go so far, if he could, out of the common way, *ut nec facta audiat Pelopidarum;* that he might not so much as hear of the actions of the sons of Adam. But, whither shall we fly, then? into the deserts, like the ancient hermits?

Qua terra patet fera regnat Erynnis.
In facinus jurasse putes.

One would think that all mankind had bound themselves by an oath to do all the wickedness they can; that they had all, as the Scripture speaks, sold themselves to sin: the difference only is, that some are a little more crafty (and but a little, God knows) in making of the bargain. I thought, when I went first to dwell in the country, that without doubt I should have met there with the simplicity of the old poetical golden age: I thought to have found no inhabitants there, but such as the shepherds of Sir Philip Sidney in Arcadia, or of Monsieur d'Urfé upon the banks of Lignon; and began to consider with myself, which way I might recommend no less to posterity the happiness and innocence of the men of Chertsey: but to confess the truth, I perceived quickly, by infallible demonstrations, that I was still in old England, and not in Arcadia, or La Forrest; that if I could not content myself with anything less than exact fidelity in human conversation, I had almost as good go back and seek for it in the Court, or the Exchange, or Westminster Hall. I

ask again, then, whither shall we fly, or what shall we do? The world may so come in a man's way that he cannot choose but salute it; he must take heed, though, not to go a whoring after it. If by any lawful vocation or just necessity men happen to be married to it, I can only give them St. Paul's advice: "Brethren, the time is short; it remains that they that have wives be as though they had none. But I would that all men were even as I myself."

In all cases they must be sure that they do *mundum ducere*, and not *mundo nubere*. They must retain the superiority and headship over it: happy are they who can get out of the sight of this deceitful beauty, that they may not be led so much as into temptation; who have not only quitted the metropolis, but can abstain from ever seeing the next market town of their country.

CLAUDIAN'S OLD MAN OF VERONA.

HAPPY the man who his whole time doth bound
Within the enclosure of his little ground.
Happy the man whom the same humble place
(The hereditary cottage of his race)
From his first rising infancy has known,
And by degrees sees gently bending down,
With natural propension to that earth
Which both preserved his life, and gave him birth.
Him no false distant lights by fortune set,
Could ever into foolish wanderings get.
He never dangers either saw, or feared,
The dreadful storms at sea he never heard.
He never heard the shrill alarms of war,
Or the worse noises of the lawyers' bar.
No change of consuls marks to him the year,
The change of seasons is his calendar.
The cold and heat winter and summer shows,
Autumn by fruits, and spring by flowers he knows.

He measures time by landmarks, and has found
For the whole day the dial of his ground.
A neighbouring wood born with himself he sees,
And loves his old contemporary trees.
Has only heard of near Verona's name,
And knows it, like the Indies, but by fame.
Does with a like concernment notice take
Of the Red Sea, and of Benacus lake.
Thus health and strength he to a third age enjoys,
And sees a long posterity of boys.
About the spacious world let other roam,
The voyage Life is longest made at home.

THE SHORTNESS OF LIFE AND UNCERTAINTY OF RICHES.

If you should see a man who were to cross from Dover to Calais, run about very busy and solicitous, and trouble himself many weeks before in making provisions for the voyage, would you commend him for a cautious and discreet person, or laugh at him for a timorous and impertinent coxcomb? A man who is excessive in his pains and diligence, and who consumes the greatest part of his time in furnishing the remainder with all conveniences and even superfluities, is to angels and wise men no less ridiculous; he does as little consider the shortness of his passage that he might proportion his cares accordingly. It is, alas, so narrow a strait betwixt the womb and the grave, that it might be called the *Pas de Vie*, as well as the *Pas de Calais*. We are all ἐφήμεροι as *Pindar* calls us, creatures of a day, and therefore our Saviour bounds our desires to that

little space; as if it were very probable that every day should be our last, we are taught to demand even bread for no longer a time. The sun ought not to set upon our covetousness, no more than upon our anger; but as to God Almighty a thousand years are as one day, so, in direct opposition, one day to the covetous man is as a thousand years, *tam brevi fortis jaculatur ævo multa*, so far he shoots beyond his butt. One would think he were of the opinion of the *Millenaries*, and hoped for so long a reign upon earth. The patriarchs before the flood, who enjoyed almost such a life, made, we are sure, less stores for the maintaining of it; they who lived nine hundred years scarcely provided for a few days; we who live but a few days, provide at least for nine hundred years. What a strange alteration is this of human life and manners! and yet we see an imitation of it in every man's particular experience, for we begin not the cares of life till it be half spent, and still increase them as that decreases. What is there among the actions of beasts so illogical and repugnant to reason? When they do

anything which seems to proceed from that which we call reason, we disdain to allow them that perfection, and attribute it only to a natural instinct. If we could but learn to number our days (as we are taught to pray that we might) we should adjust much better our other accounts, but whilst we never consider an end of them, it is no wonder if our cares for them be without end too. Horace advises very wisely, and in excellent good words, *spatio brevi spem longam reseces;* from a short life cut off all hopes that grow too long. They must be pruned away like suckers that choke the mother-plant, and hinder it from bearing fruit. And in another place to the same sense, *Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam*, which Seneca does not mend when he says, *Oh quanta dementia est spes longas inchoantium!* but he gives an example there of an acquaintance of his named Senecio, who from a very mean beginning by great industry in turning about of money through all ways of gain, had attained to extraordinary riches, but died on a sudden after having supped merrily, *In ipso actu benè*

cedentium rerum, in ipso procurrentis fortunæ impetu; in the full course of his good fortune, when she had a high tide and a stiff gale and all her sails on; upon which occasion he cries, out of Virgil:

Insere nunc Melibœe pyros, pone ordine vites:

Go to, Melibæus, now,
Go graff thy orchards and thy vineyards plant;
Behold the fruit!

For this Senecio I have no compassion, because he was taken, as we say, in *ipso facto*, still labouring in the work of avarice; but the poor rich man in St. Luke (whose case was not like this) I could pity, methinks, if the Scripture would permit me, for he seems to have been satisfied at last; he confesses he had enough for many years; he bids his soul take its ease; and yet for all that, God says to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and the things thou hast laid up, whom shall they belong to?" Where shall we find the causes of this bitter reproach and terrible judgment; we may find, I think, two, and God perhaps saw more. First, that

he did not intend true rest to the soul, but only to change the employments of it from avarice to luxury; his design is to eat and to drink, and to be merry. Secondly, that he went on too long before he thought of resting; the fulness of his old barns had not sufficed him, he would stay till he was forced to build new ones, and God meted out to him in the same measure; since he would have more riches than his life could contain, God destroyed his life and gave the fruits of it to another.

Thus God takes away sometimes the man from his riches, and no less frequently riches from the man: what hope can there be of such a marriage where both parties are so fickle and uncertain; by what bonds can such a couple be kept long together?

I.

Why dost thou heap up wealth, which thou must quit,
Or, what is worse, be left by it?
Why dost thou load thyself, when thou'rt to fly,
O man ordained to die?

II.

Why dost thou build up stately rooms on high,
Thou who art underground to lie?
Thou sow'st and plantest, but no fruit must see;
For death, alas! is sowing thee.

III.

Suppose, thou fortune couldst to tameness bring,
And clip or pinion her wing;
Suppose thou couldst on fate so far prevail
As not to cut off thy entail.

IV.

Yet death at all that subtlety will laugh,
Death will that foolish gardener mock
Who does a slight and annual plant engraff,
Upon a lasting stock.

V.

Thou dost thyself wise and industrious deem;
A mighty husband thou wouldst seem;
Fond man! like a bought slave, thou, all the while
Dost but for others sweat and toil.

VI.

Officious fool! that needs must meddling be
In business that concerns not thee!
For when to future years thou extend'st thy cares,
Thou deal'st in other men's affairs.

VII.

Even aged men, as if they truly were
Children again, for age prepare,
Provisions for long travail they design
In the last point of their short line.

VIII.

Wisely the ant against poor winter hoards
The stock which summer's wealth affords,
In grasshoppers, that must at autumn die,
How vain were such an industry.

IX.

Of power and honour the deceitful light
Might half excuse our cheated sight,
If it of life the whole small time would stay,
And be our sunshine all the day.

X.

Like lightning that, begot but in a cloud,
Though shining bright, and speaking loud,
Whilst it begins, concludes its violent race,
And where it gilds, it wounds the place.

XI.

Oh, scene of fortune, which dost fair appear
Only to men that stand not near.
Proud poverty, that tinsel bravery wears,
And like a rainbow, painted tears.

XII.

Be prudent, and the shore in prospect keep,
In a weak boat trust not the deep.
Placed beneath envy, above envying rise;
Pity great men, great things despise.

XIII.

The wise example of the heavenly lark.
Thy fellow poet, Cowley, mark,
Above the clouds let thy proud music sound,
Thy humble nest build on the ground.

THE DANGER OF PROCRASTINATION.

A letter to Mr. S. L.

I AM glad that you approve and applaud my design of withdrawing myself from all tumult and business of the world and consecrating the little rest of my time to those studies to which nature had so motherly inclined me, and from which fortune like a step-mother has so long detained me. But nevertheless, you say—which But is ærugo mera, a rust which spoils the good metal it grows upon. But, you say, you would advise me not to precipitate that resolution, but to stay a while longer with patience and complaisance, till I had gotten such an estate as might afford me, according to the saying of that person whom you and I love very much, and would believe as soon as another man, *cum dignitate otium.* This were excellent advice to

Joshua, who could bid the sun stay too. But there's no fooling with life when it is once turned beyond forty. The seeking for a fortune then is but a desperate after game, it is a hundred to one if a man fling two sixes and recover all; especially if his hand be no luckier than mine. There is some help for all the defects of fortune, for if a man cannot attain to the length of his wishes, he may have his remedy by cutting of them shorter. Epicurus writes a letter to Idomeneus, who was then a very powerful, wealthy, and it seems bountiful person, to recommend to him, who had made so many men rich, one Pythocles, a friend of his, whom he desired to be made a rich man too: But I entreat you that you would not do it just the same way as you have done to many less deserving persons, but in the most gentlemanly manner of obliging him, which is not to add anything to his estate, but to take something from his desires. The sum of this is, that for the uncertain hopes of some conveniences we ought not to defer the execution of a work that is necessary, especially

when the use of those things which we would stay for may otherwise be supplied, but the loss of time never recovered. Nay, further yet, though we were sure to obtain all that we had a mind to, though we were sure of getting never so much by continuing the game, yet when the light of life is so near going out, and ought to be so precious, *Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*, the play is not worth the expense of the candle. After having been long tossed in a tempest, if our masts be standing, and we have still sail and tackling enough to carry us to our port, it is no matter for the want of streamers and topgallants ; *utere velis, totos pande sinus.* A gentleman in our late civil wars, when his quarters were beaten up by the enemy, was taken prisoner and lost his life afterwards, only by staying to put on a band and adjust his periwig. He would escape like a person of quality, or not at all, and died the noble martyr of ceremony and gentility. I think your counsel of *festina lente* is as ill to a man who is flying from the world, as it would have been to that unfortunate well-bred gentleman,

who was so cautious as not to fly undecently from his enemies, and therefore I prefer Horace's advice before yours.

——*Sapere aude ; incipe.*

Begin : the getting out of doors is the greatest part of the journey. Varro teaches us that Latin proverb, *Portam itineri longissimam esse.* But to return to Horace,

——*Sapere aude ;*
Incipe. Vivendi qui recte prorogat horam
Rusticus expectat dum labitur amnis ; at ille
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise ;
He who defers the work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,
Till the whole stream which stopped him should be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on.

Cæsar (the man of expedition above all others) was so far from this folly, that whensoever in a journey he was to cross any river, he never went one foot out of his way for a bridge, or a ford, or a

ferry; but flung himself into it immediately, and swam over; and this is the course we ought to imitate if we meet with any stops in our way to happiness. Stay till the waters are low, stay till some boats come by to transport you, stay till a bridge be built for you; you had even as good stay till the river be quite past. Persius (who, you used to say, you do not know whether he be a good poet or no, because you cannot understand him, and whom, therefore, I say, I know to be not a good poet) has an odd expression of these procrastinations, which, methinks, is full of fancy.

Jam cras hesternum consumpsimus, ecce aliud cras egerit hos annos.

Our yesterday's to-morrow now is gone,
And still a new to-morrow does come on;
We by to-morrows draw up all our store,
Till the exhausted well can yield no more.

And now, I think, I am even with you, for your *otium cum dignitate* and *festina lente*, and three or four other more of your new Latin sentences: if I

should draw upon you all my forces out of Seneca and Plutarch upon this subject, I should overwhelm you, but I leave those as *triarii* for your next charges. I shall only give you now a light skirmish out of an epigrammatist, your special good friend, and so, *vale*.

MART. LIB. 5, EP. 59.

To-morrow you will live, you always cry;
In what far country does this morrow lie,
That 'tis so mighty long ere it arrive?
Beyond the Indies does this morrow live?
'Tis so far-fetched, this morrow, that I fear
'Twill be both very old and very dear.
To-morrow I will live, the fool does say;
To-day itself's too late, the wise lived yesterday.

MART. LIB. 2, EP. 90.

Wonder not, sir (you who instruct the town
In the true wisdom of the sacred gown),
That I make haste to live, and cannot hold

Patiently out, till I grow rich and old.
Life for delays and doubts no time does give,
None ever yet made haste enough to live.
Let him defer it, whose preposterous care
Omits himself, and reaches to his heir,
Who does his father's bounded stores despise,
And whom his own, too, never can suffice :
My humble thoughts no glittering roofs require,
Or rooms that shine with ought be constant fire.
We ill content the avarice of my sight
With the fair gildings of reflected light :
Pleasures abroad, the sport of Nature yields
Her living fountains, and her smiling fields :
And then at home, what pleasure is 't to see
A little cleanly, cheerful family ?
Which if a chaste wife crown, no less in her
Than fortune, I the golden mean prefer.
Too noble, nor too wise, she should not be,
No, nor too rich, too fair, too fond of me.
Thus let my life slide silently away,
With sleep all night, and quiet all the day.

OF MYSELF.

It is a hard and nice subject for a man to write of himself; it grates his own heart to say anything of disparagement and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise for him. There is no danger from me of offending him in this kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune allow me any materials for that vanity. It is sufficient for my own contentment that they have preserved me from being scandalous, or remarkable on the defective side. But besides that, I shall here speak of myself only in relation to the subject of these precedent discourses, and shall be likelier thereby to fall into the contempt than rise up to the estimation of most people. As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew or was capable of guessing what the world, or glories, or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave me a secret bent of aversion from them,

as some plants are said to turn away from others, by an antipathy imperceptible to themselves and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of running about on holidays and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to all constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persuasions or encouragements, to learn without book the common rules of grammar, in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the usual exercises out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind as I am now (which I confess I wonder at myself) may appear by the latter end of an ode which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish, but of this part which I here set down, if a very little were corrected, I should hardly now be much ashamed.

IX.

This only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honour I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone.
The unknown are better than ill known.
Rumour can ope the grave;
Acquaintance I would have, but when it depends
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

X.

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.
My house a cottage, more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden painted o'er
With Nature's hand, not Art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field

XI.

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well twice runs his race.

And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, this happy state,
I would not fear, nor wish my fate,
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display
Or in clouds hide them—I have lived to-day.

You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets (for the conclusion is taken out of Horace), and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamped first, or rather engraved, these characters in me. They were like letters cut into the bark of a young tree, which with the tree still grow proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early is a hard question. I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse as have never since left ringing there. For I remember when I began to read, and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read

any book but of devotion), but there was wont to lie Spenser's works; this I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there (though my understanding had little to do with all this); and by degrees with the tinkling of the rhyme and dance of the numbers, so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old, and was thus made a poet as immediately as a child is made an eunuch. With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the university, but was soon torn from thence by that violent public storm which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars to me, the hyssop. Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen me in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the court of one of the best princesses of the world. Now though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life, that is, into

much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant, for that was the state then of the English and French Courts; yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewitch or entice me when I saw that it was adulterate. I met with several great persons, whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it. A storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage. Though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honourable trust, though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for

present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition in banishment and public distresses, yet I could not abstain from renewing my old schoolboy's wish in a copy of verses to the same effect.

> Well then ; I now do plainly see,
> This busy world and I shall ne'er agree, etc.

And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from His Majesty's happy restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, with no greater probabilities or pretences have arrived to extraordinary fortunes. But I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself, and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it.

> Thou, neither great at court nor in the war,
> Nor at th' exchange shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar ;
> Content thyself with the small barren praise,
> Which neglected verse does raise, etc.

However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on; I cast myself into it *A corps perdu*, without making capitulations or taking counsel of fortune. But God laughs at a man who says to his soul, "Take thy ease": I met presently not only with many little encumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness (a new misfortune to me) as would have spoiled the happiness of an emperor as well as mine. Yet I do neither repent nor alter my course. *Non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum.* Nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married, though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

———*Nec vos, dulcissima mundi*
Nomina, vos Musæ, libertas, otia, libri,
Hortique sylvæque anima remanente relinquam.

Nor by me e'er shall you,
You of all names the sweetest, and the best,

You Muses, books, and liberty, and rest;
You gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,
As long as life itself forsakes not me.

But this is a very petty ejaculation. Because I have concluded all the other chapters with a copy of verses, I will maintain the humour to the last.

Martial, Lib. 10, Ep. 47.

Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem, etc.

Since, dearest friend, 'tis your desire to see
A true receipt of happiness from me;
These are the chief ingredients, if not all:
Take an estate neither too great nor small,
Which *quantum sufficit* the doctors call;
Let this estate from parents' care descend:
The getting it too much of life does spend.
Take such a ground, whose gratitude may be
A fair encouragement for industry.
Let constant fires the winter's fury tame,
And let thy kitchens be a vestal flame.
Thee to the town let never suit at law,

And rarely, very rarely, business draw.
Thy active mind in equal temper keep,
In undisturbèd peace, yet not in sleep.
Let exercise a vigorous health maintain,
Without which all the composition's vain.
In the same weight prudence and innocence take
Ana of each does the just mixture make.
But a few friendships wear, and let them be
By Nature and by Fortune fit for thee.
Instead of art and luxury in food,
Let mirth and freedom make thy table good.
If any cares into thy daytime creep,
At night, without wines, opium, let them sleep.
Let rest, which Nature does to darkness wed,
And not lust, recommend to thee thy bed,
Be satisfied, and pleased with what thou art;
Act cheerfully and well the allotted part.
Enjoy the present hour, be thankful for the past,
And neither fear, nor wish the approaches of the last.

Martial, Lib. 10. Ep. 96.

Me, who have lived so long among the great,
You wonder to hear talk of a retreat:
And a retreat so distant, as may show
No thoughts of a return when once I go.
Give me a country, how remote so e'er,
Where happiness a moderate rate does bear,
Where poverty itself in plenty flows
And all the solid use of riches knows.
The ground about the house maintains it there,
The house maintains the ground about it here.
Here even hunger's dear, and a full board
Devours the vital substance of the lord.
The land itself does there the feast bestow,
The land itself must here to market go.
Three or four suits one winter here does waste,
One suit does there three or four winters last.
Here every frugal man must oft be cold,
And little lukewarm fires are to you sold.

There fire's an element as cheap and free
Almost as any of the other three.
Stay you then here, and live among the great,
Attend their sports, and at their tables eat.
When all the bounties here of men you score :
The Place's bounty there, shall give me more.

EPITAPHIUM VIVI AUCTORIS.

Hic, O viator, sub Lare parvulo
Couleius *hic est conditus, hic jacet ;*
Defunctus humani laboris
Sorte, supervacuâque vitâ.

Non indecora pauperie *nitens,*
Et non inerti *nobilis* otio,
Vanoque dilectis popello
Divitiis animosus hostis.

Possis ut illum dicere mortuum,
En terra jam nunc quantula *sufficit !*
Exempta sit curis, viator ;
Terra sit illa levis, precare.

Hic sparge flores, *sparge breves* rosas,
Nam vita gaudet mortua floribus,
Herbisque odoratis corona
Vatis adhuc cinerem calentem.

[*Translation.*]

EPITAPH OF THE LIVING AUTHOR.

O WAYFARER, beneath his household shrine
Here Cowley lies, closed in a little den;
A life too empty and his lot combine
To give him rest from all the toils of men.

Not shining with unseemly shows of want,
Nor noble with the indolence of ease;
Fearless of spirit as a combatant
With mob-loved wealth and all its devotees.

That you may fairly speak of him as dead,
Behold how little earth contents him now!
Pray, wayfarer, that all his cares be fled,
And that the earth lie lightly on his brow.

Strew flowers here, strew roses soon to perish,
For the dead life joys in all flowers that blow;
Crown with sweet herbs, bank blossoms high, to cherish
The poet's ashes that are yet aglow.

HENRY MORLEY.

A FEW NOTES.

Page 15. *Fertur equis*, &c. From the close of Virgil's first Georgic: said of horses in a chariot race,

> Nor reins, nor curbs, nor threatening cries they fear,
> But force along the trembling charioteer.
>
> *Dryden's translation.*

„ 16. *En Romanos*, &c. Virgil, Æneid I., when Jove says,

> The people Romans call, the city Rome,
> To them no bounds of empire I assign,
> Nor term of years to their immortal line.
>
> *Dryden's Virgil.*

„ 18. "*Laveer with every wind.*" Laveer is an old sea term for working the ship against the wind. Lord Clarendon used its noun, "the schoolmen are the best laveerers in the world, and would have taught a ship to catch the wind that it should have gained half and half, though it had been contrary."

„ 24. *Amatorem trecentæ Pirithoum cohibent catenæ.* Horace's Ode, Bk. IV., end of ode 4. Three hundred chains bind the lover, Pirithous:

> Wrath waits on sin, three hundred chains
> Pirithous bind in endless pains. *Creech's Translation.*

„ 25. *Aliena negotia*, &c. From Horace's Satires, sixth of Book II.

„ 25. *Dors*, cockchafers.

„ 26. *Pan huper sebastos* Lord over All

„ 27. *Perditur hæc inter misero Lux.* Horace, Satires, II., 6. This whole Satire is in harmony with the spirit of Cowley's Essays.

„ 29. *A slave in Saturnalibus.* In the Saturnalia, when Roman slaves had licence to disport themselves.

„ 29. *Unciatim*, &c. Terence's Phormio, Act I., scene 1, in the opening: "All that this poor fellow has, by starving himself, bit by bit, with much ado, scraped together out of his pitiful allowance—(must go at one swoop, people never considering the price it cost him the getting)." *Eachard's Terence.*

Page 30. Κακά θηρία, &c. Paul to Titus, "The Cretans are always liars, *evil beasts, slow bellies.*"

,, 31. *Quisnam igitur*, &c. Horace's Satires, II., 7. "Who then is free? The wise man, who has absolute rule over himself."

,, 31. Oenomaus, father of Hippodameia, would give her only to the suitor who could overcome him in a chariot race. Suitors whom he could overtake he killed. He killed himself when outstripped by Pelops, whom a god assisted, or, according to one version, a man who took the nails out of Oenomaus' chariot wheels, and brought him down with a crash.

,, 45. *Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus.* Never less alone than when alone.

,, 47. *Sic ego*, &c. From Tibullus, IV., 13.

,, 51. *O quis me gelidis*, &c. From the Second Book of Virgil's Georgics, in a passage expressing the poet's wish:

> Ye sacred Muses, with whose beauty fired,
> My soul is ravished and my brain inspired;
> Whose priest I am, whose holy fillets wear,
> Would you your poet's first petition hear:
> Give me the ways of wandering stars to know;
> The depths of Heaven above, and Earth below;
> Teach me, &c. . . . .
> . . . . .
> But if my heavy blood restrain the flight
> Of my free soul aspiring to the height
> Of Nature, and unclouded fields of light:
> My next desire is, void of care and strife,
> To lead a soft, secure, inglorious life.
> A country cottage near a crystal flood,
> A winding valley and a lofty wood;
> Some god conduct me to the sacred shades
> Where bacchanals are sung by Spartan maids,
> Or lift me high to Hæmus hilly crown,
> Or in the vales of Tempè lay me down,
> Or lead me to some solitary place,
> And cover my retreat from human race.
>
> *Dryden's translation.*

,, 56. *Nam neque divitibus.* Horace's Epistles, I., 18.

Page 58. *Tankerwoman*, "water-bearer, one who carried water from the conduits."

,, 60. *Bucephalus*, the horse of Alexander. Domitian is said to have given a consulship to h s horse *Incitatus*.

,, 60. The glory of Cato and Aristides. See the parallel lives in Plutarch.

,, 64. *O fortunatos nimium*, &c. Men all too happy, and they knew their good.

,, 70. *Hinc atque hinc*. From Virgil's Æneid, Book I.

Page 75. *Mr. Hartlib. . . . if the gentleman be yet alive.* Samuel Hartlib, a public-spirited man of a rich Polish family, came to England in 1640. He interested himself in education and other subjects, as well as agriculture. In 1645 he edited a treatise of Flemish Agriculture that added greatly to the knowledge of English farmers, and thereby to the wealth of England. He spent a large fortune among us for the public good. Cromwell recognised his services by a pension of £300 a year, which ceased at the Restoration, and Hartlib then fell into such obscurity that Cowley could not say whether he were alive or no.

,, 75. *Nescio qua*, &c. Ovid. Epistles from Pontus.

,, 76. *Pariter*, &c. Ovid's Fasti, Book I. Referring to the happy souls who first looked up to the stars, Ovid suggests that in like manner they must have lifted their heads above the vices and the jests of man. Cowley has here turned "locis" into "jocis."

,, 80. *Ut nos in Epistolis scribendis adjuvet*. That he might help us in writing letters.

,, 81. *Qui quid sit pulchrum*, &c. Who tells more fully than Chrysippus or Crantor what is fair what is foul, what useful and what not.

,, 92. *Sword of bacon*, skin of bacon. First English *sweard*. So green sward is green surface covering.

,, 100. The Country Life is a translation from Cowley's own Latin Poem on Plants.

,, 105. Evelyn had dedicated to Cowley his Kalendarium Hortense.

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